An Enlightening Commentary into the Light of the Holy Qur'an vol. 13

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Sayyid Kamal Faqih Imani

Translated by
Sayyid Abbas Sadr-'ameli

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From Surah an-Naml (27) to Surah al- ‘Ankabut (29) verse 44

The light of Islam has enlightened and continuing to enlighten every corner in the world and seekers of truth have closely associated to the Holy Quran which carries the Word of Allah (SWT) to humanity. With increasing focus and attention to the Holy Quran, efforts has been done to provide a pure, correct and accurate translation of this divine book. But sometimes it is difficult for the readers to understand all of the apparent and hidden meanings and it is the duty of every Muslim, man or woman, to read, understand and contemplate on the Holy Qur’an according to his own capacity. Hence, the need for proper explanation becomes obvious and necessary. The book titled, “An Enlightening Commentary into the Light of the Holy Qur’an” compiled by a group of Muslim scholars, under the direction of Ayatullah Allamah Al-Hajj Sayyid Kamal Faqih Imani is a valuable effort which presents a thorough commentary on the Quran in 20 volumes made available to the reader.

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Translator(s):

Sayyid Abbas Sadr-'ameli [5]

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Introduction

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

***“Verily the Qur'an doth guide to that which is most right (or stable) (to run societies), and giveth the glad tidings to the Believers who work deeds of righteousness, that they shall have a magnificent reward”*[1].**

"We have sent down to thee the book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad tidings to Muslims" 2.

"When those come to thee who believe* in *Our Signs, say: 'Peace be on you: Your Lord hath inscribed for Himself (the rule on Mercy; verily, if any of you did evil in ignorance, and thereafter repented, and amended (his conduct), Lo! He is oft-forgiving, Most Merciful" 3.

The light of Islam is illuminating hearts of individuals in nearly all parts of the world, in spite of heavy barriers and careful controls and religious interrogation exerted by not only many governments of non-Muslim nations, but also in some Muslim countries, against their believing people, especially during the years after the Islamic Revolution of Iran.

The effective influence of the light of the truth together with the speed in the movement of the Age has brought forth a more vital exchange of thought and religious ideology in connection with the Holy Qur'an.

In regard to this, we refer to what the Messenger of Allah (S) has said about it:

When afflictions surround you like the dark night refer to the Qur'an, because, it is an Intercessor whose intercession is accepted. It reports the evils (of people) which will be confirmed. It leads the person to Heaven who puts it in front of himself (follows it); and he who puts it behind himself (neglects it) will be driven to Hell.

This very Qur'an is the best guide to the best ways. It is a Book in *which there are useful explanations, statements and gaining (of goals). It is the Separator (of right and wrong).* 4

Obviously, those people whose language is not Arabic can refer to the Holy Book in English, because this is an international language and it is possible for all nations with any native language, to read and understand it in English. As far as we know, there are more than 50 different English translations of Qur'an available in Iran alone, and probably others exist in libraries (and homes) throughout the world.

This makes it easy for the lovers of truth to obtain the knowledge of the Holy Qur'an and Islamic ideology, through the medium of English, which formerly was acquired directly by the Arabic and Persian languages.

But, a fact should be mentioned here that not all of the words of Allah are easily understood by ordinary people and need explanatory commentary, i.e. 'Tafsir'.

Alongside this path, there are some problems that those eager to learn the Qur'anic truth should know and be careful of. Hence, we deal here with some of the difficulties we were involved in and recognized when we were preparing this endeavour; the fruit of our humble labour of more than three years, a translation of the commentary of over one section (of the 30 sections) of the Holy Qur'an from different commentary sources.

The work is based upon popular commentaries accepted by Muslim scholars. We consulted other books and present living scholars, learned in the Qur'anic Sciences for our work to produce this commentary in a simple standard of English easily understood by the laymen.

The style of writing here is a mixture of British-English and American-English, understandable for all the readers; even for those acquainted with only one of them. However, excuse us for using interchangeable spellings. If both are used, from time to time, they are acceptable; for example, honour and honor.

Not All English Versions of Quran Are Acceptable

Some Western translators of the Holy Qur'an; not all of them, and some producers of literature on Islam in the English language, are the anti-Muslim elements which are busy in distorting the facts about the faith to create disruption in Islamic ideology.

These hostile minds have attempted to black-list the Holy Prophet (S) and the religion of Islam, through their purposeful and subtle mis-translations, mis-interpretations, mis-representations and distortion of the facts.

The distortion and the misinterpretations are so skilfully decorated in linguistic excellence and delusive logic that the blind lovers of the English language, who are hardly or even totally unaware of the actual Qur'anic factors of their own faith, get caught up in the falsehood tempered with eloquence and they swallow the 'sugar-coated poisonous pills of deceit' allowing themselves to become duly conditioned to serve the purpose of the publications of the hostile camps.

The current standing of Evil has always been against the Truth in the history of man, even before written history, when the sons of Adam came into existence.

When these antagonistic elements have successfully extended their active influence upon our own religion, ideology and social tradition, we are also duty bound to Allah, His Final Word (the Holy Qur'an), the Faith, and to Islam, to do our best to present to every sincere seeker of Truth, a selection of a translation of the verses of the Holy Qur'an of the original Arabic text, and the 'Tafsir' (commentary) of them.

By the way, we believe that it is the essential belief of 'Shi'a' that the present Qur'an, that which is in our hands today, is the Holy Book of Allah, revealed to the holy Prophet Muhammad (S), as arranged and compiled during his lifetime and read out to him and it contains nothing less or more than what was revealed.

And it should be noted that,

"Nay, but it is a Glorious Qur'an, (inscribed) in a tablet preserved."[5]**,**

whose present arrangement is the order in which the various verses were sorted and arranged at the

command of the Holy Prophet (S), himself.

This is the uncorrupted or undisturbed Word of *Allah,* the preservation of which has been guaranteed by *Allah,* Himself:

"We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)" [6].

Furthermore, the English translations, along with the Arabic text of the verses, in this book, are selected from different translations of English versions of the Holy Qur'an, (whose names are listed at the end of the book under the title of **'References'**) which are from the best available sources in which some better styles and more proper meanings are employed. The translator and editor did their best to preserve this divine message and in conveying the Qur'anic facts in English.

In a few instances this writer, the translator, changed a word of those existing translations to a better one, from the existing material which was employed in this work.

What is a 'Commentary'?

A pure, correct, accurate translation of the Qur'an is necessary, but sometimes it is difficult for the readers to understand all of the apparent and hidden meanings and it is the duty of every Muslim, man or woman to read, understand and contemplate on the Holy Qur'an according to his own capacity:

"...read you, therefore, of the Qur'an as much as may be easy for you.." [7].

This reading has to be done not only with the tongue, voice and eyes; a mere recitation, but, also, with the best light that our intellect can supply, and even more, with the truest and purest light which our heart and conscience give us.

However, it is not always possible to fully understand the Holy Book as *Allah* says:

"That is indeed a Qur'an most honourable,"Which none shall touch but those who are purified" [8].

Thus, some additional information is needed. For example, it is sometimes necessary, for understanding the text, to refer to the particular occasion for the revelation of a particular verse; or to know the philological changes of a word used at the time of revelation or before it and the meaning that it has in Arabic, today.

Or the alphabetical symbols which evidently and undoubtedly are secrets, and especially the ambiguous /mutashabihat/; the knowledge of which has been announced to be with the /rasixuna fil 'ilm/; those deeply established in knowledge.

They are some things that only 'the particular ones, the sinless ones', besides the Prophet (S), himself,

viz, Ahlul-Bait, knew with all the Qur'anic facts and talked about them in their traditions and narrations (as He says:

"And whom We had taught knowledge from Our own Presence"9.

For instance, the Apostle, himself, answered the questions which used to be asked by people as to the meaning of certain words in the verses revealed, or details of certain historical or spiritual matters on which they sought more enlightenment. These answers and explanations or in other words, the commentaries were gathered by some Companions /ashab/ and were afterward written down which are called 'Hadith' or 'traditions'.

Of course, the holy Prophet (S) had openly declared in Hadith-uth- Thaqalayn that the Qur'an is with the Ahlul-Bait, and to avoid going astray, the Muslims should be attached to these two. Later, the Ahlul-Bait's explanations and narrations, were added to them and together with the effect of expert religious scholars, in the past and present, established 'Exegesis' (explanation of Qur'an) which became a science in itself and was called 'Tafsir', commentary.

'Commentary' shows how every verse, or group of verses, were revealed to the holy Prophet (S) on a particular occasion, but which also has a general meaning. The particular occasion and the particular people concerned have passed away, but the general meaning and its application remain true for all time.

This is also one of the miracles of the Qur'an that with the help of 'commentary' it is always open and it is always new for those new generations to come.

The Current Commentary

As was mentioned earlier, the light of Islam is enlightening every corner in the world and seekers of truth, having referred to the translations of the Holy Qur'an, find that they need 'Tafsir', (commentary).

Some of them, Shi'a believers in particular have been led to this Center; Imam Ali (a) Library, requesting a clear, concise English Tafsir; 'a commentary of the Holy Qur'an'.

From the beginning of Islam until today (although many times the Holy Qur'an has been translated into English and a few of them are published with brief, detailed commentary, as footnotes, there has rarely been, as far as we know, a fairly complete commentary in English sufficient for them to find their answers. So the decision was made to supply this commentary.

Ayatullah Mujahed Al-Hajj, Allamah Sayyid Kamal Faqhih Imani, the founder and responsible party of this Islamic Scientific Research Center, approached us and reported the situation to scholars and appropriate research societies.

Then 12 people, who had varying nationalities and educational backgrounds, especially from the point of the English language and Islamic Theology, gathered. In their first gathering, which was held on 28th Safar, 1412 (1370 H. / 1991), they concluded that the commentary of the whole Qur'an which they intended to supply in English, would take many years to produce.

In order to quench the thirst of the lovers of Truth who had demanded it again and again, they decided to supply the commentary of the last section of the Qur'an, as a sample, and after its publication and receiving constructive comments by the readers and with a better skillfulness of the ones involved, the translation of the commentary would begin from the beginning of the Holy Qur'an.

Therefore, they thought it would be better that the sample, entitled **'An Enlightening Commentary Into the Light of the Holy Qur'an',** begin with Surah Insan, the end of the 29th Section, because the Qur'an was revealed for the improvement of Man and this Surah is about Man and his creation from a lowly life-germ which can develop unto the highest point where no other creature can ascend.

But, after several weeks the number of us dwindled to a handful and after some months, until the present, we remain two people; the translator and the editor. During this period of more than three years, a few people have tried their hands at this task to have a share in the translation, but, for different reasons, they were not successful.

However, we are completely grateful for their efforts and extend our thanks for their attempts, as well as to those who had any involvement in this work.

Attributes Needed for Working on This Kind of Commentary

This endeavour needed not only the knowledge and skillfulness in the English language, but also the knowledge of Arabic, and Islamic science and culture, because Tafsir is an attempt to analyze and explain the meaning of verses in the Holy Qur'an.

Moreover, Allah, Himself, says:

"We have sent down to thee the book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad Tidings to Muslims"[10].

Then, it needs that those involved know a little bit about almost all sciences and knowledge that human beings are concerned with when working with the commentary. Also, the phonetic sound systems of the two languages, English and Arabic, are different. Therefore, when an Arabic word from the Qur'an is mentioned in the English text, it is shown with the phonetic alphabet and in its special phonetical sign, i.e.: / /, to avoid using 'Arabic script' in the book, as far as possible.

A transliteration table of the Arabic letters and sounds and the corresponding phonetic signs, applied in this book, is given at the beginning of the book.

The Problems in Translating

We tried to avoid mixing up our own personal theories and conclusions with the interpretation of the text itself. With the help of Allah*,* we did our best; at times asking for guidance from some learned religious men (Ruhaniyan), and used all the knowledge and experience we possessed in the service of the Holy Qur'an for its commentary, hoping that *Allah* accepts it.

The nature of this sort of endeavour is so that, in the course of translation, some difficulties arise from various causes.

For instance, cultures in the Arabic language and English language are different so that some of the words like /amrun bayn al amrayn/ in the case of fatalism and freewill are nearly impossible to translate into English, because of the difference in the concept in English literature; or the meaning of a word like 'prostration', in English, is rather different with what /sajdah/ exactly means in Arabic.

In such cases, we selected the meaning of the words from among what the earlier commentators and phililogists used and where they were not unanimous, we also used the ideas of new writers, who had reasonable advantages in their interpretations, when the senses adopted with the commentary sources that we were taking and translating materials from. Explanations, of course are always helpful which we took benefit from, too.

It is noteworthy that there are some circumstances in the text, of the commentary, in which a verse or verses of Qur'an from other Suras rather than the Surah under discussion are mentioned as evidence or, thereby, for strengthening the idea.

The text of these verses and also the traditions and narrations from the holy Prophet or Ahlul-Bait (a) is printed in bolder type than the running commentary in order to distinguish, at a glance, the substance from the shadow. Also, the mentioned verses are generally taken from A. Yusuf Ali's translation.

It Was Only By His Merciful Will!

Translators Note

Both the editor and the translator have interesting factual stories to tell of how the way of this endeavour was paved by Providence and how they were divinely led to be absorbed into this task, Alhamdulillah. A few words given here in this regard are not to be misunderstood as a display of vanity for any peculiar distinction; for there is none.

It is purely to attract the attention of the readers to a living instance of the Providential implementation of the divine plan and how man drifts to his assignment and how matters are automatically manipulated, though, they seem yet only to be circumstantial.

"He said: Our Lord is He Who gave to each (***created***) ***thing its form and nature and further gave*** (***it***) ***guidance"***[11].

For example, once, on a night, the writer of these lines, the translator, had seen in a dream that the Holy Qur'an, was placed, honourably, on a high position, wide open, high above a very great crowd of people amongst whom he was standing, watching. The full name of his was clearly written in the midst of the writings on the right page of it with magnificent bold letters.

The dream was obviously a good one, but it did not mean vividly to him at that time.

It was four years before he found out, in the course of translating the commentary of verses 11-16 from Surah 'Abasa No. 80, both the meaning of that dream and the cause of later changes in his career of twenty years, as a manager of a profitable Foreign Language Center, thanks to Allah.

It is always true what the Qur'an says:

"You will not unless Allah wills, surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise"[12].

By His graceful arrangement this writer was separated from his almost material gains, of this fleeting world, to be set toward the assured, perfect, pure, spiritual rewards of the next, everlasting world from Him, Allah willing, when he began translating the commentary of the Qur'an and entered this great Divine Ocean of light, he found out that from earlier times such a success had been appointed and bestowed to him by Allah.

Therefore, all changes and graceful arrangements directly are from Him and it was His helpful Will that planned His graceful design and showered the ability and insight upon us to lead us to the present point. We are eagerly in hopes that He will help us and guide us in all cases to complete the task successfully so that He accepts it from us.

Editor's Note

In my case, it is a fact that only by the grace of Allah have I come to be at the helm working, side-by-side with the translator, on this commentary of the Holy Qur'an. Editing and checking this translation of '**An Enlightening commentary into the Light of the Holy Quran**' has been a most important and rewarding experience for me.

To be of value in this work several things were necessary; my mother tongue, English, was almost at the top of the list. Then, having the ability to use a computer and printer, which involved me having to learn and use a Farsi program named Zarnegar, produced in Tehran, Iran, I was able to make use of the wonderful array of fonts it contains; necessary to type the Arabic and English languages.

Next, living in Iran, for four years, has made it possible for me to become acquainted with the native

language and customs. However, the greatest asset, of all, is that I am a Shi'a Muslim woman.

It is fifteen (15) years from now, that in America, I became enlightened to the existence of the Holy Qur'an and accepted it as a better way of life. Over this period of time it has put me in touch with the purity of the religion and the logical answers to the religious questions I had as a Catholic.

My father told us (during our childhood) that if we ever wanted to know anything we should go to the source and to always have the correct tools on hand to do the job right.

When I started hearing and seeing, on television, the upheaval of the Islamic Revolution, in Iran, and the speech of a brave and courageous man they called Ayatullah Khomeini, I became very intense on knowing why it was happening and in knowing who this man was who had been exiled and was making his return to his homeland.

"Our Lord! We have heard the call of one calling (us) to faith, 'Believe ye in the Lord,, and we have believed. Our Lord! Forgive us our sins, blot out from us our iniquities, and take to Thyself our souls in the company of the righteous"[13].

It was something more spectacular than I had ever read about in my high school history books. There was a charge in it that I could not explain, and up until that time, I had never really heard anything about Islam, Prophet Muhammad or Muslims, for that matter.

I bought ***A. Yussuf Ali's English Translation of the Holy Qur'an,*** basing my decision on my father's counsel and I began from page one.

It was talking about the same things I had already learned; Adam and Eve in the Garden, disobeyed God due to the wiles of Satan and then, were expelled to Earth; Moses is given the scripture and leads his people out of Egypt, but they forfeited their covenant for a golden calf; Abraham, Ismail and Issac of the religion true, and there, Mary.

Hail Mary! Chaste, pure, chosen above other women, given glad tidings of a Word from Him; his name will be Christ Jesus, son of Mary, held in honor... [14]

And it went on: Practise charity, take care of the orphans, speak a speech that is just, beware of the deceits of the Unbelievers...I was in awe as I neared the end. No place was any obscenity found –no trace of ugliness which I found in the Bible –nothing but pure scripture; a complete religion, the one and only continuing from the first of Abraham. So, it became crystal clear to me that Islam is the final, refined message from God.

True, just, undeniable, containing what I had always felt and that is this: There is only One God; unique, needing no partner, powerful, and yet merciful and kind. How could God be more than one; Creator of such a vast universe and more?

With this understanding, though, came many tests to my new-found-faith; albeit necessary tests. Did I really believe - did I really submit to His Will - was I really worthy?

I began by only putting on a scarf, covering all of my hair.

"And say to the believing women...that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers..." [15]

Immediately the responses that I encountered proved the rightness of it all. I was chided, spit at, hit and cursed. Well, of course, a great deal of this was due to the propaganda which caused mass hysteria against Iran and not having their facts straight about the religion of Islam, however, it hurt just the same, but I had learned forgiveness and perseverance from my mother.

It was difficult for my family in the beginning; this change I was making, however, we are very close at heart, today, due to my faith and reliance on Allah.

"And out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: 'My Lord! Bestow on them Thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood.'" [16]

Almost at once the veils over my understanding fell away and I started rejecting a lot of the 'big-business' propaganda that had infiltrated into my life.

"Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from error; whosoever rejects Evil and believes in God bath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks..." [17]

The 'Big Sell' eats away at the very fabric of human society to the point that life has only a superficial meaning and high value is put on every inanimate object which man can produce.

"The life of this world is alluring to those who reject faith, and they scoff at those who believe. But the righteous will be above them on the Day of Resurrection; for God bestows His abundance on whom He will " [18].

I had developed an intense desire to go to Iran--the country of martyrs; having an air so thick with emotions, direction and goal, at that time, and having the presence of an undeniable strength caressing it in the hands of an unseen power.

Ten years after I started practicing the tenets of Islam the opportunity presented itself for me to be able to fulfil my desire.

"Not equal are those Believers who sit (at home) and receive no hurt, and those who strive and fight in the cause...God has granted a grade higher to those who strive..." [19]

I wished very much to become involved in some type of work regarding the Holy Qur'an and in due time I was approached to work with a group of people on a commentary of the Holy Qur'an.

"***And for those who fear God, He prepares a way out" "And He provides for him from*** (***sources***) ***he never could imagine..."***[20]

Those of you who know anything about the rigors of editing know that it is very time-consuming and attention to detail is very necessary.

Spending many hours discussing the meaning of a single word, or phrase, can cause the ordinary soul to become frustrated, but that frustration is ultimately quelled when peace and tranquillity cover the heart at the point where there is that final agreement and gives those involved renewed enthusiasm to continue.

Sometimes you will notice more spacing than usual on a line or within the phonetic brackets (/ /), but this is due to the fact that the Zarnegar program is a Farsi program and it took much time trying to place the little phonetic line over, or the little dot under, the correct letter, because English is written from left to right and Farsi is written from right to left, so, I had a bit of anarchy on my hands for a time.

I leave you, now, in the hopes that you, too, will be provoked to question and seek. (Seek and you will find). Looking back, I feel that Allah does consider me worthy.

"God is the protector of those who have faith; from the depths of darkness He will lead them into light"[21].

Wa Salam.

1. 17:9
2. 16:89
3. 6:54
4. Usul al-Kafi, vol 2, p. 599.
5. 85:21, 22
6. 15:9
7. 73:20
8. 56:77, 79
9. 18:65
10. 16:89
11. 20:50
12. 76:30
13. 3:193
14. 3:42-45
15. 24:31
16. 17:24
17. 2:256
18. 2:212
19. 4:95
20. 65:2-3
21. 2:257

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By the way, it should be notified that for the translation of this volume, Tafsir Nemunah has been mainly utilized.

* * * *

يَأَيها النّاس قَدْ جَاءَكُم بُرْهَنٌ مِّن رّبِّكُمْ وَ أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُوراً مّبِيناً

"O mankind! Verily there has come to you a convincing proof* (*the Messenger and the Qur'an*) *from your Lord: for We have sent unto you a light* (*that is*) *manifest." [1]

إِنّا نحْنُ نَزّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَ إِنّا لَهُ لحَفِظونَ

***"We have, without doubt, sent down the Message and We will assuredly Guard it* (*from corruption*)."** [2]

وَ مَنْ أَعْرَض عَن ذِكرِى فَإِنّ لَهُ مَعِيشةً ضنكاً وَ نحْشرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ أَعْمَى

"But whosoever turns away from My Message* (*the Qur'an*)*, verily for him is a straitened toilsome life, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgement". [3]

وَ نُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْءَانِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَ رَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

"And We send down** (**stage by stage**) **of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy for those who believe ..."4

1. 4:174
2. 15:9
3. 20:124
4. 17:82

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A Presentation to Muslims

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ أَطِيعُواْ اللّهَ وَأَطِيعُواْ الرَّسُولَ وَأُوْلِي الأَمْرِ مِنكُ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficient, The Merciful

"O ye who believed! Obey Allah, and obey the Apostle, and those charged with authority among you". 1

(***'Those charged with authority'***

are only the twelve sinless Imams (a) and; at the time of occultation, Sources of Imitation, who are learned, pious, and just, should be referred to.)

في إكمال الدين في حديث عن جابر الجعفي عن جابر بن عبد الله الانصاري قال: قلت: يا رسول الله عرفنا الله ورسوله، فمن اولي الامر الذين قرن الله طاعتهم بطاعتك؟ فقال (ص) هم خلفائي يا جابر، وأئمة المسلمين بعدي أولهم علي بن أبي طالب، ثم الحسن والحسين، ثم علي بن الحسين، ثم محمد بن علي المعروف في التوراة بالباقر وستدركه يا جابر فإذا لقيته فاقرأه مني السلام. ثم الصادق جعفر بن محمد، ثم موسى بن جعفر، ثم علي بن موسى، ثم محمد بن علي، ثم علي بن محمد، ثم الحسن بن علي، ثم سميي وكنيي حجة الله في أرضه، وبقيته في عباده ابن الحسن بن علي، ذاك الذي يفتح الله على يديه مشارق الارض ومغاربها

In 'Ikmal-ud-Din' a tradition, through 'Jabir-il-Ju'fi', is narrated from Jabir-ibn- Abdillah thus:

I said:

"O Messenger of Allah, we have known Allah and His Apostle; then who is 'Ulil-Amr', those that Allah has made their obedience the same as your obedience?'

Then, the Prophet (S) said:

'O Jabir! they are, after me, my successors and the Guides of Muslims; the first of them is Ali-ibn-Abi Talib; then (Imam) Hassan, and (Imam) Husain; then Ali-ibn-il-Husain; then Muhammad-ibn-Ali, known in the Torah as Baqir, whom you will see.

O Jabir! When you visit him, give my regards to him. After him, there is Sadiq, -Ja'far-ibn-Muhammad; and after him Musa-ibn-Ja'far; then Ali-ibn-Musa; then Muhammad-ibn-Ali; then Ali-ibn-Muhammad, then Hassan-ibn-Ali; and after him (there comes) Al-Gha'im whose name and sir-name is the same as mine. He is Allah's Authority on the Earth and His Remainder amongst His servants.

He is the son of (Imam) Hassan-ibn-Ali (a.-Askari). This is the very personality by whose hands Allah will open the Easts and Wests of the world.'[2]

قال الله تعالى: "وما ينطق عن الهوى إن هو إلا وحي يوحى"

"Nor does the Apostle speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed".[3]

قال النبي (ص): "إني تارك فيكم الثقلين، كتاب الله حبل ممدود من السماء إلى الأرض وعترتي أهل بيتي، وإن اللطيف الخبير أخبرني أنهما لن يفترقا حتى يردا علي الحوض فانظروا بماذا تخلفوني" وفي حديث آخر: "لن تضلوا ما إن تمسكتم بهما"

The Prophet (S) said:

"I leave behind me two weighty (very worthy and important) things:

The book of Allah (i.e. the Quran), which is a stretched string from the heaven to the earth, and my progeny, my Ahlul-Bait; for verily Allah, The Merciful, The Aware, informed me that never, never, will these Two get separated from each other until they meet me at the Houd of Kauthar (the Pond of Abundance).

Therefore, be careful and contemplate on how you will treat them (after me)"

...and in another tradition it is added:

"Never, never, shall you get astray if you attach yourself to these two".[4]

Abul-Hassan-ir-Rida (a) said:

"May the Mercy of Allah be upon the servant who Keeps alive our commandment".

I asked him (a) how the one could keep your commandment alive.

He (a) said:

"He (can) learn our sciences and teach them to people. In fact if people knew (the merits) and goodnesses of our speech, surely they would follow us." 5

1. 4:59
2. Ikmal-ud-Din, Vol. 1, p. 253; with nearly similar meaning, in Yanabi-ul-Mawaddah, p. 117
3. 53:3,4
4. Ma'uni-ul-Akhbur, p. 90, tradition 2, & Musnad Ahmad-ibn-Hanbal, Vol. 3, p.17, and other books from the Sunnite School and Shi 'ah School mentioned in Ihqaq-ul-Haqq, Vol 9, p. 309 to 375
5. Ma' ani-ul-Akhbar, p. 180 & 'Uyun-i-Akbar-ur-Rida, Vol. 1, p. 207

Surah An-Naml, Chapter 27

(The Ant)
No. 27 (Revealed at Mecca)
93 Verses in 7 Sections

The Feature of the Surah

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

This Surah contains 93 verses, and due to verse No. 18, which is about ants and Solomon (as), it is called An-Naml (The Ant); but it is also called Sulayman, and Ta, Seen.

The whole verses of this Surah were revealed in connection with different events and occasions, and the holy phrase: /bismillah-ir-rahman-ir-rahim/ is repeated two times in it, one of them is at the beginning of the Surah and the other one is in verse No. 30 at the onset of Solomon's letter to Sheba, the Queen.

The struggles of four Divine prophets (Moses, Solomon, Salih, Lut) against different tribes of their times have been referred to in this Surah, the most detailed of them is that of Solomon which resulted to Sheba's faith in Monotheism.

Another portion of the verses of this holy Surah is about Solomon's speaking with the birds, such as hoopoe and some insects like ants, and the attendance of some jinns in the army and court of Solomon, and, finally, bringing the throne of Sheba from Yemen to Syria in a short moment.

The Virtue of the Surah

A tradition stated by Imam Sadiq (as) announces:

"Whoever recites the triple suras which begin with Ta Seen (Surah Ash-Shu'ara, An-Naml, and Qasas) in the night before Friday, he will be one of the friends of Allah and he will be nigh to Him and he will be involved in His Grace and support."

(If he fulfils his religions duties sincerely.)1

1. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 74

Section 1: Moses Commissioned with Apostleship

Surah An-Naml - Verses 1-3

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

طس تِلْكَ ءَايَاتُ الْقُرْءَانِ وَكِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ

هُدي وَبُشْرَي لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلاَةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُم بِالاَخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

1. "Ta, Seen. These are the verses of the Qur'an and the Book (that makes things) manifest,"
2. "A guidance and glad tidings for the believers,"
3. "Those who establish prayer and give Zakat (the poor-rate), and of the Hereafter, they are sure."

The Arabic word ***/mubin/*** is derived from /'ibanah/ which is both intransitive and transitive and means

‘clear’ and ‘to make clear’ both.

One of Allah’s way of treatment is that He lets revelation, with its superiority and high rank, available for human beings.

The Qur’anic word ***/zakat/*** contains two main meanings; one of them is the proper meaning which is known ‘as poor-rate’, and the other is the general meaning which is ‘helping the needy’ in any form and manner it may be.

In this holy verse, the latter one is meant, because this Surah had been sent down in Medina, where the formal order of Zakat (alms) was issued.

However, at the beginning of the Surah we encounter the abbreviated letters of the Qur’an, and regarding to the fact that immediately next to that the magnificence of the Qur’an is referred to, it seems that one of its secrets is that this great Book and its clear verses are formed by the simple alphabetic letters.

It requires that such a Creator, Who has brought such a beautiful sacred relic into being out of such simple items, be praised. We have, of course, discussed in detail in this field at the beginning of Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, Surah ’Al-i-‘Imran, No. 3, and Surah Al-’A‘raf, No. 7.

Next to the abbreviated letters: (Ta, Seen.), the verse continues, saying:

“…These are the verses of the Qur’an and the Book (***that makes things***) ***manifest,”***

The application of the word ***/tilka/*** in this verse is for stating the greatness of these heavenly verses; and the Qur’anic word ***/mubin/*** used for the Qur’an, is an emphasis indicating that the Qur’an is both clear and makes the facts clear.

Some of the commentators have said that probably the words ‘***Qur’an***’ and ‘***Kitabin Mubin***’ (***The Book Manifest***) refer to two separate things and the latter indicates to /lauh-i-mahfuz/ (***Protected Tablet***), but the apparent of the verse shows that both of them speak of one thing: one of them in the form of utterances and recitation, and the other in the form of a ‘written Book’.

In the second noble verse, there have been stated two other qualities for the Qur’an. It is the Holy Qur’an which causes ‘guidance’, and the means of good tidings for the believers.

It says:

“A guidance and glad tidings for the believers,”
“Those who establish prayer and give Zakat (***the poor-rate***)***, and of the Hereafter, they are sure.”***

Thus, their belief in both origin and resurrection is firm, and their link with Allah and His servants is strong. Therefore, the above qualities point to both their complete faith and their practical inclusive

program.

There may arise a question here that if these believers have chosen a straight path from the point of basic doctrines and practice both, why is it necessary that the Qur'an comes for their guidance? Regarding to the fact that guidance consists of different stages, each of which is a preparation for the higher stage and higher stages, the answer of this question is made clear.

Moreover, the continuation of this guidance is itself an important matter.

It is the same thing that, by saying:

"Guide us** (**O' Lord**) **on the Straight Path"

in our all daily prayers, we ask Allah that He makes us fix in this way and He continues it, because without His grace this continuation is impossible.

Besides that, taking the advantages of the verses of 'the Qur'an' and 'the Book manifest' is possible only for those who carry the soul of 'seeking the truth' in them, though they have not obtained the complete guidance yet.

If we see that, in one occurrence, the Qur'an has been introduced as the origin of the piety of the pious ones,[1] and in another one as the source of guidance for the Muslims[2], and here it is as the cause of guidance for the 'believers', one of its reasons is that a person will not go after the reality unless, at least, a stage of piety, submission, and belief in realities exists in his heart, and a disbeliever does not enjoy the light of this 'manifest Book' because the eligibility of place is also conditioned.

Besides all of these, the combination of '***guidance***' and '***glad tidings***' is possible only for 'the believers' and such a 'glad tidings' is not available for others.

This makes it clear that if in some verses of the Qur'an guidance has vastly and expansively been defined for all people, like Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 185 which says:

"...a guidance for mankind in",

its purpose is all those who have an appropriate ground in them for accepting the Truth, else, the arrogant, obstinate, and fanatic persons are some blind hearted ones that if, instead of one sun, thousand suns shine on them, they get the least advantage of them.

Surah An-Naml – Verses 4-5

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالآخِرَةِ زَيَّنَّا لَهُمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَهُمْ يَعْمَهُونَ

أُوْلَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ الْعَذَابِ وَهُمْ فِي الآَخِرَةِ هُمُ الآَخْسَرُونَ

4. "Verily those who do not believe in the Hereafter, We have made their (***ugly***) ***deeds fair-seeming unto them, so they wander bewildered."***
5. "These are those for whom shall be a grievous chastisement, and in the Hereafter they shall be the greatest losers."

These holy verses refer to the states of those who are not believers.

One of their most dangerous states is mentioned as follows:

"Verily those who do not believe in the Hereafter, We have made their (***ugly***) ***deeds fair-seeming unto them, so they wander bewildered."***

In the view of such people, pollution is purity, indecency is beautiful, meanness is honour, and wretchedness and misery are considered happiness and victory by them.

Yes, such is the condition of those who go astray and persist on it. It is evident that when a person commits an ugly and wrong action, gradually its ugliness decreases in his view and he will fall into the habit of it. When he is accustomed to it, he brings forth some justifications for it.

Later that evil thing may appear as a beautiful thing, or even as a duty, in his view. There are many felonious and polluted persons who are really proud of their deeds and consider them as a positive fact.

This change in values, and the confusion of the criterions in one's view, the result of which is being bewildered and misguided in life, is the worst state that a person may receive.

It is interesting that this ornamentation of deeds has been attributed to Allah, and this is because He is the cause of all causes in the world of existence, and the effect of any thing relates to Allah.

Yes, Allah has put this peculiarity in the repetition of action, that one gradually falls into habit of it and his sense of discrimination varies, while his responsibility does not disappear, nor can it be counted as a rejection and deficiency for the Lord. (Be careful)

Then the Qur'an refers to the consequence of those evil deeds that are made fair-seening to them, and states the fate of such persons as follows:

"These are those for whom shall be a grievous chastisement..."

In this world, they will be hopeless and bewildered, and in the Hereafter they will encounter a terrible chastisement.

The verse continues saying:

"...and in the Hereafter they shall be the greatest losers."

The reason of that they are 'the greatest losers' is the same thing that is mentioned in Surah Al-Kahf, No. 18, verses 103 and 104 which announce:

"Say: 'Shall We inform you of the greates losers in (their) deeds?"
"Those whose effort is lost in this world's life, while they think that they are working good deeds."

What a loss is greater than this that one considers his ugly deeds beautiful and does his best to commit them thinking that he is doing a positive task, but at the end he sees he has provided naught for him but misery and wretchedness.

By the way, the losers are of different groups:

1- 'Khasir'.

The one whose whole life and capitals are ruined:

"...Say: 'The losers surely are those who shall have lost themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection..."[3]

2- 'In Loss'.

The one who is not a true believer and does not do righteous deeds:

"By Time."
"Surely man is in loss,"
"Save those who believe and do good deeds..."[4]

3- 'Clear Loss'.

The one who worships Allah not earnestly:

"...so that if such a one who worships Allah only by tongue, so that if good befalls him he is satisfied therewith, and if a trial afflicts him he turns back his face; he loses this world and (also) the Hereafter; that is indeed the manifest loss."[5]

4- 'The Utmost Losers'.

Those who are deviated and think that they are on the right path:

"Those whose effort is lost in this world's life, while they think that they are working good deeds."[6]

Some Islamic traditions indicate that the losers are those who: do not pay alms (Zakat), persist on

committing sins, and have the power of saying the right but they do not say it. These are the most unjust ones, because they want to improve their worldly life by spoiling the religion.

Some Traditions Upon Losers

1. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

"The loser is one whose yearning is for other than Allah."[7]

2. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

"A loser is he who neglects improving the affairs of (his) Resurrection."[8]

3. Imam Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as) said:

"He who has reckoned his own self has gained, and he who has neglected it has lost."[9]

4. The same Imam (as) said:

"How much a loser is he who has no (good) share in Hereafter!"[10]

5. Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as) said:

"The utmost loser among people is he who has ability of saying the Truth, but he does not say."[11]

6. Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as) wrote a letter to Masqalat-ibn-Hubarat-ish-Shaybani, who was the Governor of Ardeshir Khurrah (Iran) from his side (as), as follows:

"I have come to know concerning you a matter which if you have done it you have displeased your Allah and disobeyed your Imam.

You are distributing among the Arabs (Bedouins) of your kin who tend towards you the property of the Muslims which they collected by dint of their spears and horses and on which their blood was shed. ... and do not reform your world by ruining your religion, since then you will be among losers by the way of (your) deeds..."[12]

Surah An-Naml - Verse 6

وَإِنَّكَ لَتُلَقَّي الْقُرْءَانَ مِن لَدُنْ حَكِيمٍ عَلِيمٍ

6. "And most surely you receive the Qur'an from One All-Wise, All-Knowing."

The knowledge of the holy Prophet (S) is a divine and intuitive knowledge.

The receiver of the Divine revelation is the Messenger of Allah (S) and Qur'an is the sign of the knowledge and wisdom of Allah.

In the verse under discussion, as a complementary to the former explanations about the greatness of the content of the Qur'an, and a preparation for the stories of the prophets, which immediately begins after it, the Qur'an says:

"And most surely you receive the Qur'an from One All-Wise, All-Knowing."

The Qur'anic words ***/hakim/*** and ***/'alim/*** both refer to the awareness of Allah, but the word ***/hikmat/*** (***wisdom***) usually states the practical aspects, while ***/'ilm/*** (***knowledge***) points to the theoretical aspects.

In other words, the Qur'anic word ***/'alim/*** refers to the infinite knowledge of Allah, and the application of the word /hakim/ informs of the view, order, and aim of creation of this world, as well as sending down the Qur'an.

Such Qur'an, which has been sent down from the side of such Lord, should be a manifest Book, makes things clear, works as a guidance and glad tidings for the believers, and its stories should be free from any superstition and distortion.

Note

The important true problem in man's life is that he must comprehend the facts as they really are and have an explicit proper position before them.

Imagination, predictions, wrong desires, and false likes and dislikes must not hinder man to see and understand the realities in their true form. So the most important definition which has been introduced for philosophy is: 'perceiving the facts of things as they are'.

That was why that one of the most important things that the immaculate ones used to ask for from Allah was that they said:

"O Allah! Show me (the facts of) the things as they are, (so that I can recognize the values of different things and treat them rightly."

This circumstance is not possible without having Faith, because restive low desires and egocentric wishes are the greatest barriers of this way, and removing the hinders is not possible save with piety and controlling the sensual desires.

It is for this reason that in these noble verses we recite:

"Verily those who do not believe in the Hereafter, We have made their (ugly) deeds fair-seeming unto them, so they wander bewildered."[13]

We can see the actual and manifest example of this meaning clearly in the life of a group of mammonists of our time. They are proud of some things, and consider them as a part of civilization that, indeed, are nothing but shame, pollution, and disgrace.

– They think of libertinism as a sign of freedom.

– They know the nakedness and indecency of women as a reason for civilization.

– They take part in the competition of luxury as a sign of 'personality'.

– Being polluted in kinds of corruptions is the epiphany of liberty for them.

–They consider murder, crime, and destruction as the evidence of power.

– They count destruction and usurpation of others' capitals, as they call, reestablishing those properties.

– They use the common communication means along side of the worst anti-ethical programs and call it as a reason for 'respecting the people's demand'.

– They tread on the rights of the deprived as a sign of 'honouring the human's rights'.

– They call captivity in the grips of addictions, lusts, disgraces, and indecencies 'a kind of liberty'.

– In their view, treachery, dishonesty, and gaining wealth, in any way that it can be, are considered as a reason for their talent and competency.

– In their culture, observing the principles of justice and respecting others' rights is the sign of inefficiency and lack of competency, while falsehood, perjury, hypocrisy, and deceit are the sign of policy.

Shortly speaking, their evil and shameful deeds seem so fair to them that not only they do not feel shame of them but also they boast for them. It is evident, then, that how the feature of such a society will be and what direction is the path which will end to it!

Surah An-Naml - Verses 7-9

إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَي لأَهْلِهِ إِنِّي ءَانَسْتُ نَاراً سَأَتِيكُم مِّنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ أَوْ ءَاتِيكُم بِشِهَابٍ قَبَسٍ لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهَا نُودِيَ أَن بُورِكَ مَن فِي النَّارِ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

يَامُوسَي إِنَّهُ أَنَا اللَّهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

7. "(Remember) When Moses said unto his family: 'Verily I perceive a fire; soon will I bring you news of it, or I will bring you a flaming brand, that you warm yourselves."
8. "So when he came to it, a voice was heard: 'Blessed is whoever is in the fire and whoever is about it, and Glory be to Allah, the Lord of the World."
9. "O' Moses! Verily, I am Allah, The Mighty, The Wise;"

The word 'Moses' has been mentioned in the Qur'an for 136 times and his story has been told in 24 suras. Thus, the explanation concerning the children of Israel is studied in about 900 verses of the Qur'an.

Moses accompanied with his wife who was pregnant, and they were going from Madyan towards Egypt. On one side, the darkness of the night in the cold stormy weather of the desert, and, on the other side, the childbirth of his wife, forced Moses to search. The verses under discussion are about this event.

Here it points to the most sensitive moments of Moses' life, that is when the first light of revelation enlightened his heart and he was acquainted with the message and the speech of Allah.

The verse says:

"(Remember) When Moses said unto his family: 'Verily I perceive a fire..."
"...soon will I bring you news of it, or I will bring you a flaming brand, that you warm yourselves."

This event happened by the same night when Moses was in a dark desert on the way toward Egypt, accompanied with his wife, Shu'ayb's daughter, and he lost the way. Then a terrible storm began to blow and at the same time his wife felt the pains of childbirth. Moses thought he severely needed to make a fire in order to use its warmth, but there was nothing in that desert for it.

As soon as he saw the light of a flame from distance, he became happy and took it as a sign of the existence of someone or some ones there. He told them that he would go and bring them either some news from it, or a burning firebrand so that they might warm themselves by it.

It is noteworthy that Moses says he brings 'them' news or a flaming band, (the pronoun of which plural). This may show that there had been a child or children with him too, because his marriage bad happened in Madyan ten years before that. Or it may be for the sake that, in that horrible desert, that idea could give some further calmness to his addressees.

In the next verse, the Qur'an indicates that Moses left his family there, and moved toward the place where he had seen a fire.

When he reached the fire he heard a voice, as the verse says:

"So when he came to it, a voice was heard: 'Blessed is whoever is in the fire and whoever is about it, and Glory be to Allah, the Lord of the World."

The commentators of the Qur'an have delivered different ideas concerning who might be the person mentioned in the phrases:

"Whoever is in the fire"

and

"whoever is about it".

What seems more probable is that, the objective of 'the one in the fire' is Moses who was so close to the fire found inside the green tree that as if he were inside the tree; and the objective of 'the one about it' is the near-stationed angels of Allah who, at that particular moment, had surrounded that sacred land.

Or, on the contrary, the objective of those in the fire, is the Divine angels, and the objective of 'the one about it' is Moses (as).

However, some Islamic narrations indicate that when Moses (as) approached the fire, he stopped and watched it carefully. He saw that from the inside of a green branch of the tree a flaming brand was shining. Every moment the flame was becoming brighter and brighter and the tree was growing more green and more beautiful.

Neither the heat of the fire was to burn the tree, nor the moist of the tree caused the fire to die. He wondered. He bowed to take some fire with the small piece of wood he had in his hand, but the fire came toward him.

He terrified and went back. Sometimes he tried to go toward the fire and sometimes the fire itself came toward him. Suddenly a voice was heard, giving him the glad tidings of revelation.

The purpose is that Moses approached the fire so nigh that he was proportionate to the phrase

'***whoever is in the fire***'.

The third commentary which has been stated upon this phrase is that the purpose of

"whoever is in the fire"

is the Light of Allah which was shown by the burning firebrand; and the purpose of the phrase

"whoever is about it"

is Moses who was nigh to it.

However, in order that there would not appear here any misconception concerning materiality of Allah, at the end of the verse, the sentence:

“Glory be to Allah, the Lord of the World”

makes it clear that He is free from any defect, deficiency, materiality and material accidents.

Again a voice was heard which addressed Moses, saying:

“O’ Moses! Verily, I am Allah, The Mighty, The Wise;”

This sentence was for the sake that no doubt might remain in Moses’ mind and he would know that it was the Lord of the Worlds Who was speaking with him, not the flaming brand, nor the tree, the Lord Who does not fail, Who is ‘Mighty’ and Who is the Possessor of Wisdom and Device.

This meaning, in fact, is a premise for the statement of the miracle which will be referred to in the next holy verse, since miracle originates from two attributes of Allah: ‘Power’ and ‘Wisdom’. However, before discussing about the next verse, this question arises here that how did Moses understand and was assured that this voice was Allah’s, not other than that?

In answer to this question, it can be said that this voice, being accompanied with a clear miracle, viz., glittering a fire from inside the branch of a green tree, was a manifest reason that it was a Divine matter.

Moreover, as we will find out by the next verse, after this voice Moses was ordered a command which contained the miracles of ‘Rod and white hand’, and these two miracles were two other evidences for the reality of this voice.

Besides all of these things, principally, the Divine voice must have a particular quality which makes it separate from any other voice, and when one hears it, it affects on his heart so deeply that he never doubts that it is the voice of Allah.

Surah An-Naml - Verses 10-11

وَأَلْقِ عَصَاكَ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَآنٌّ وَلَّي مُدْبِراً وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ يَامُوسَي لاَتَخَفْ إِنّـِي لاَيَخَافُ لَدَيَّ الْمُرْسَلُونَ

إِلاَّ مَن ظَلَمَ ثُمَّ بَدَّلَ حُسْناً بَعْدَ سُوءٍ فَإِنِّي غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

10. “‘And cast down your staff!’ So when he saw it moving as if it were a serpent, he turned back retreating and did not return. (***It was told him:***) ***‘O’ Moses! Fear not; surely the messengers shall not fear in My presence;”***
11. “Save he who has been unjust, then he does good instead after evil, for verily I am the Forgiving, the Merciful;”

In view of the fact that the mission of prophethood, especially before a cruel and unjust one like

Pharaoh, needed the outward and inward power and might as well as a firm proof of legitimacy, here Moses was commanded to throw down his Rod to show it.

The verse says:

"'And cast down your staff!'..."

Moses (as) Threw down his Rod and suddenly it changed into a serpent.

The verse continues saying:

"...So when he saw it moving as if it were a serpent, he turned back retreating and did not return..."

This is also probable that, at the beginning, the staff changed into a small snake and, in later stages, it became a great serpent. Here, Moses was again addressed and he was told not to be afraid.

It says:

"...(It was told him:) 'O' Moses! Fear not; surely the messengers shall not fear in My presence;"

Moses should be aware that here is the position of nearness and Allah's secure sanctuary, the Mighty, the High; this rank is a place where there is not any fear or terror. That is, O' Moses! You are at the presence of Allah, the Most High, and His presence is with absolute security.

A similar meaning to this one is recited in Surah Qasas, No. 28, verse 31 which says:

"...O' Moses! Come you forward and fear you not; for surely you are in security."

Through next verse the Qur'an has stated an exception for the holy phrase:

"...surely the messengers shall fear not in My presence"

when it says:

"Save he who has been unjust, then he does good instead after evil, for verily I am the Forgiving, the Merciful;"

Allah accepts the penitence of those who repent and He gives them security, too.

Concerning the circumstance of this exception the Late Tabarsy, the writer of Majma'-ul-Bayan, says:

"But those people, except the prophets, who have done wrong and then repent remorsefully and decide not to return again, should know that He is the Forgiving, the Acceptor of repentance."

The reason why the prophets have been mentioned as an exception is that they never commit any

wrong and, because of the rank of infallibility, they are far from any sins and evils.

Therefore, there they are not inside the exception, and prophets are like others only in the principle of doing duties. This kind of exception has also been referred to by Qurtabi in his commentary, Vol. 4, P. 8.

The author of Jawami'–ul–Jami', the commentary, Vol. 4, P. 450 concerning the meaning of this sentence says as follows:

"Whoever, except the prophets, does injustice, then he is remorseful of his ugly deeds and repents and decides not to repeat them any more, surely Allah will forgive his injustice and He is merciful to him."

Some other great commentators have said that there is not any retrenched matter in this verse and the fact is that those, other than the prophets, are not secured. Then there is an exception where it implicitly says: save those who, after their fault and sins, repent and improve, and such ones will be in the Divine security, too.

Surah An-Naml - Verses 12-13

وَأَدْخِلْ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجْ بَيْضَآءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوءٍ فِي تِسْعِ ءَايَاتٍ إِلَي فِرْعَوْنَ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْماً فَاسِقِينَ

فَلَمَّا جَآءَتْهُمْ ءَايَاتُنَا مُبْصِرَةً قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ

12. "And put your hand in your bosom, and it will come forth white (***shining***) ***without harm,*** (***this miracle is***) ***among the nine signs to Pharaoh and his people; verily they are a transgressing people."***
13. "So when Our clear signs came to them, they said: 'This is a manifest sorcery'."

These nine signs or miracles are the miracles that Moses (as) brought before Pharaoh, else he (as) had some other miracles, too.

By the way his every miracle can be counted two miracles, because when his Rod became a serpent, it was one miracle, and when the serpent changed back into Rod, it was another miracle, but the Qur'an has considered one side of it a miracle.

Moses' nine miracles are as follows:

1- The white hand (or the shining of the hand of Moses).

2- Conversion of the Rod into a giant serpent.

3- The violent storm for the enemy.

4- Locust (which dominated their farms and their trees)

5- One plant-pest agent which exterminated cereals, called in Arabic /qummal/.

6. The forges which emerged from the Nile River and made people's lives miserable and full of difficulties.

7. Nose-bleeding or 'blood' which signifies the universal counteraction of nose bleeding or the turning of the Nile into the colour blood[14]

8. Famine and draught[15]

9. The splitting of the sea[16]

Other miracles of Moses (as) are: the gushing of 12 springs from stone[17], the descending of /mann/ and /salwa/[18]

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"The purpose of ***/min qayri su'/*** **(*without harm*)** *it that this whiteness of the hand was not because of sickness of leprosy.*[19]

Anyhow, the second miracle of Moses (as) was given to him, as the verse says:

"And put your hand in your bosom, and it will come forth white (shining) without harm..."

This whiteness of hand which is an interesting shining and luminosity, and not as the result of leprosy, itself denotes to the existence of a miracle and an extraordinary event.

In order to grant some more grace to Moses and give further possibility to deviated persons to be guided, the Qur'an, implicitly says to Moses (as) that his miracles are not limited to these two ones, but:

"...(this miracle is) among the nine signs to Pharaoh and his people; verily they are a transgressing people."

You are sent to Pharaoh and his people equipped with these nine miracles, as well as other great ones, because they are a transgressing people and they need guidance.

From the apparent of this verse, it is understood that these two miracles have been among nine known miracles of Moses (as).

In commenting on Surah Al-'Isra', No. 17, verse 101 it was concluded before that there are seven other miracles for Moses, five of which are: storm, plant-pests, locusts, forges, and turning of the Nile water into the colour of blood.

When each of these events came to Pharaohs as a warning and they encountered with some difficulty, they used to come to Moses and asked him to remove the pest.

There were two more miracles: draught and scanty of fruits, which are mentioned in Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 130.

It says:

"And certainly We afflicted the clan of Pharaoh with draught and scanty of fruits, so that they may take admonition."

At last, Moses was equipped with the strongest weapon of miracle and went towards Pharaoh and his people. He invited them to the religion of truth.

The Qur'an says:

"So when Our clear signs came to them, they said: 'This is a manifest sorcery'."

We know that this accusation was not charged only on Moses (as) but, in order to adjust their oppositions against prophets, and in order that they produce a barrier in the way of others, the arrogant fanatic people brought forth the accusation of sorcery for the prophets which itself is a clear sign for the greatness of their extraordinary work.

It is in the case that we know that prophets are some pure, pious and truth-seeking men, while sorcerers are some deviated and corrupted persons and are qualified with all qualities that a deceitful one may have.

Moreover, sorcerers had always been able to do some limited affairs, but prophets, whose customs and the content of their godly invitations made their legitimacy manifest, had no similarity to sorcerers.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 14

وَجَحَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَآ أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْماً وَعُلُوّاً فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

14. "And they denied them unjustly and proudly though their hearts acknowledged them; consider, then how was the end of the mischief-makers."

There are different sorts of infidelity and denial:

1- Disbelief may be as a result of following the fathers and customs and carnal desires. Most of disbelievers are of this kind.

2- Disbelief can be because of mere ignorance and conjectures:

"...but only fancies and mere conjectures."[20]

3- Disbelief may be hidden by hypocrisy for the one who is apparently Muslim but inwardly he is a disbeliever.

4- Disbelief may emerge out of apostasy. When a person turns back from Islam, or denies some principles of the religion, such as Hajj, prayer, Zakat, and other main ordinances of the religion, or produces an innovation in the religion, he is a disbeliever.

5- Disbelief of the denial kind can come into being for the person who heartily is assured in the legitimacy of the truth, but denies it arrogantly and because of enmity. The verse under discussion states this kind of disbelief.

So it indicates that those accusations that they brought against Moses (as) were not for the sake that they were really in doubt, but they denied the miracles unjustly and because of self-superiority.

The Qur'an says:

"And they denied them unjustly and proudly though their hearts acknowledged them..."

It is understood from this sentence that Faith has a reality besides knowledge and certainly, and blasphemy may exist because of denial and negation while there is knowledge and awareness.

In other words, the reality of the correct Faith is an 'outward and inward submission' before the truth. Thus, if a person is certain of something but he does not surrender to it inwardly or outwardly, he has not faith, but he is a disbeliever of the denial kind. This is a vast matter that now we suffice only to this short explanation here.

Imam Sadiq (as) in a tradition, explaining five kinds of disbelief, counts one of them this kind of disbelief and that one of its branches is 'denial', and he said:

"That is something that one denies while he knows that it is surely the truth which has been proved with him",

then he recited this verse.[21]

It is interesting that the Qur'an considers the motivation of the denial of the people of Pharaoh in two things: injustice and pride.

Their 'injustice' may refer to usurpation of others' rights, and their pride refers to their self-superiority over the Children of Israel.

It means that they saw if they surrendered to the signs and miracles of Moses, they both would find their unlawful interests in danger and that they would stand in the same row with their slaves, the Children of

Israel, and none of them were tolerable for them.

Or the purpose of the Qur'anic word '***unjustly***' is the injustice they did to themselves or to the Divine verses, and, the purpose of the word 'proudly' is oppression over others, as Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 9 says:

"...for they used to be unjust unto Our Signs."

However, at the end of this verse, as a lesson and gazing-stock, with a short and very expressive sentence, the Qur'an points to the evil end of the people of Pharaoh that they were drowned and destructed, where it says:

"...consider, then how was the end of the mischief-makers."

The Qur'an does not uncover the matter here, because they had read the painful story of this disbelieving people in other verses of the Qur'an and by this short sentence they may understand what they must understand.

By the way, from among their ugly qualities entirely, the Qur'an has emphasized on 'making mischief' which has a comprehensive concept. It includes both mischief in belief, speech and action, and mischief in individual and society. In fact, all their evil deeds are gathered in the word 'mischief'.

1. Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 2
2. An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 102
3. Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, verse 15
4. Surah Al-'Asr, No. 103, verses 1-3
5. Surah Al-Hajj, No. 22 verse 11
6. Surah Al-Kahf, No. 18, verse 104
7. Madinat-ul-Balaqah, Vol. 2, P. 492
8. Madinat-ul-Balaqah, Vol. 2 , P. 492
9. Qisar-ul-Hikam, No. 208, Al-Mu'jam
10. Qurar-ul-Hikam, Vol. 2, P. 746
11. Qurar-ul-Hikam, Vol. 1, P. 195
12. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, Letter No. 43
13. Current Surah, verse No. 4
14. Al-'A'raf, 133
15. Al-'A'raf, 130
16. Al-Baqarah, 50
17. Al-Baqarah, 60
18. explained under Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 57
19. The Commentary of Nur-uth-Thaqalayn
20. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 78
21. Kafi, Vol. 2, P. 287

Section 2: Solomon Inherits From David

Surah An-Naml - Verse 15

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَـانَ عِلْماً وَقَالاَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَي كَثِيرٍ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

15. "And certainly We gave David and Solomon knowledge and they both said: 'Praise belongs to Allah, Who has favoured us above many of His believing servants'."

The knowledge which has been given to David and Solomon may be the knowledge of Judgment; its reference is the verse which says:

"...and We gave him wisdom and a clear judgment",[1]

and also with reference to the verse which says:

"...and unto each (***of them***) ***We gave wisdom and knowledge..."***[2]

And it may be the knowledge of speaking with the birds, with reference to the verse which says:

"...We have been taught the language of the birds..."[3],

or it may be the knowledge of making the coat of mail, as the Qur'an says:

"...And We taught him the art of making the coat of mail..."[4]

But it is better to render the Qur'anic word ***/'ilm/*** in a general sense, that is the knowledge of administration of the country.

However, this verse speaks about two other great Divine prophets: David and Solomon. Of course, there is only a hint to David but Solomon is explained more.

Mentioning a part of the life story of these two prophets next to the story of Moses (as) is for the sake that these two prophets were from among the prophets of the Children of Israel, too.

The difference between their history and the history of other prophets is that these were more successful to establish a great government because of mental and social receptivity of the atmosphere of the Children of Israel, and they could expand the Divine religion by the help of their governmental power.

Therefore, the style of explanation of the life story of other prophets, who encountered the severe opposition of their nations and sometimes they were expelled from their home and city, is not seen here,

and the explanations are totally different. This clearly shows to what extend the difficulties may be solved and the path can become level if the Divine callers succeed to form a government.

However, here the words are about knowledge, ability, power, and dignity. It speaks about the submission of the birds and other creatures and, finally, about the severe struggle against idolatry through the way of logical invitation and, then, enjoying the power of government. And these things are the qualities that separate the life story of these two prophets from that of other prophets.

It is interesting that the Holy Qur'an here has begun the statement with the issue of the 'merit of knowledge' which is the foundation of a righteous and powerful government.

It says:

"And certainly We gave David and Solomon knowledge..."

A great deal of commentators have tried very much to find out what kind of knowledge it is that Allah bestowed on David and Solomon, and it is stated here ambiguously and not definitely, and as it was precisely said at the beginning of the commentary of the verse, some commentators, relying on some other verses of the Qur'an, have considered it '***the knowledge of judgment***':

"...and We gave him wisdom and clear judgment."[5]
"...and unto each (***of them***) ***We gave wisdom and knowledge...:***[6]

And some commentators also with frame of reference to the verses under discussion, which speak of 'the language of the birds' have counted this knowledge as the knowledge of speaking with birds, while some others, with frame of reference to the verses that talk of the knowledge of 'making the coat mail', have specified this knowledge to it.

However, it is clear that '***knowledge***', hare, has a vast meaning which includes the knowledge of monotheism, religious belief, religious laws, knowledge of judgment, and all knowledge and information which have been necessary for the formation of such extensive and powerful government.

Its reason is that the establishment of a divine government basing on justice which is an equipped and free government, is not possible without enjoying a complete knowledge. Thus, the Qur'an specifies the rank of knowledge in the human society and in establishment of government as the first stone of the foundation of this building.

And next to this sentence, from the tongue of David and Solomon, it continues saying:

"...and they both said: 'Praise belongs to Allah, Who has favoured us above many of His believing servants'."

It is interesting that immediately after stating the great merit of 'knowledge' it speaks of 'thanksgiving' in

order to make it clear that there is a thanksgiving for every blessing, and the reality of thanksgiving is that every blessing should be used in the same way that it has been created for; and these two great prophets did their best from their knowledge in formation of a Divine government.

By the way, they introduced the criterion of their own superiority to others by having 'knowledge', not by having power and government, and they also applied thanksgiving for having knowledge not for other merits, because all values belong to 'knowledge' and all powers originate from 'knowledge'.

This point is also noteworthy that they did thank for governing over a faithful people, since governing over a corrupted group, who are disbelievers, is not an honour.

There arises a question here that why did they say in their thanksgiving that 'He had favoured them above many of His believing servants' and they did not say over all believing people, though they were prophets who were above all the people of their time?

Using this kind of meaning may be for observing the principles of discipline and humility that one, in any rank, must not think of oneself above all.

Or it is for the sake that they did not consider only a particular part of time but they considered the whole times, and we know that there have been some greater prophets than them during the history of man.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 16

وَوَرِثَ سُلَيْمَانُ دَاوُدَ وَقَالَ يَآ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ عُلِّمْنَا مَنطِقَ الطَّيْرِ وَأُوتِينَا مِن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْمُبِينُ

16. "And Solomon inherited David and he said: 'O people! We have been taught the language of the birds, and we have been granted of everything; verily this is the manifest favour'."

The purpose of the Arabic word ***/waria/*** in this verse is to inherit both wealth and government, not the knowledge and prophethood, because prophethood is not something to be inherited, and the knowledge of prophets is not heritable either since it is not something to be acquired.

In this verse, at first it points to inheriting Solomon from his father David.

It says:

"And Solomon inherited David..."

Here, commentators have some different ideas as for the meaning of heritage and that what that is:

Some believe that it is only the heritage of knowledge because, according to their own thought, prophets do not leave any heritage of their own properties.

Some others have mentioned inheritance is confined to property and government, because this word recalls that concept to the mind, before anything else.

And same commentators have rendered it into the language of speaking with the birds.

But regarding to the fact that the verse is general and, in the later Qur'anic sentences the words are also about both knowledge and all other merits, there is no reason to limit the concept of the verse.

Thus, Solomon had been the heir of all merits of his father.

The traditions narrated from Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) have reasoned to this verse before those who said that prophets do not leave any heritage and laid emphasis on the tradition which says:

"We prophets do not leave any heritage".

They have reasoned that since the said tradition contrasts to the Book of Allah, it is invalid.

We read in a tradition narrated from Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) that when 'Abubakr decided to take Fadak from Fatimah (as) she (as) heard of that decision and came to 'Abubakr and said:

"Is there any thing in the Book of Allah that you inherit from your father but I do not inherit from my father? This is a wonderful thing!

Have you forgotten the Book of Allah and put it behind you when it says:

'And Solomon inherited David'?"*[7]*"

Then the Qur'an in this verse adds:

"...and he said: 'O people! We have been taught the language of the birds, and we have been granted of everything; verily this is the manifest favour'."

Some claim that the application of '***language and speaking***' for non-human beings is not correct save as metaphor; but if a non-human being also utters some sounds and words which are meaningful and indicate some matters, there is no evidence not to call it 'speaking', since 'speech' is often any words that communicate a truth and a concept.

Of course, we do not want to say that those special sounds that sometimes some animals produce because of anger, wrath, or pleasure and consent, or as the result of pain, or as a sign of affection unto their children are called language.

No, these are some sounds that they bring forth out of their mouth at the time of a special mood. But, as we see in the verses of the Qur'an, Solomon communicates some matters with hoopoe and he (as) sends a message by the hoopoe and then he asks its answer from this bird.

This shows that besides the sounds that they produce because of their moods, animals can speak in some particular conditions by the command of Allah. Another clear example is the explanation about the speech of the ant which will be mentioned later concerning the future verses of this Surah.

Of course, the vast concept of /nutq/ (speech) has been used in the Qur'an which, indeed, states the spirit and conclusion of it, and it is 'the statement of what is in mind', whether it is done by means of words and speech; or through other means, like the verse which says:

"This is Our Book that speaks against you with justice..."[8]

But we do not need to render the word /nutq/ in connection with the speech of Solomon and the birds into this sense; because according to the apparent of the above verses, Solomon was able to understand the special words that birds used for transferring their matters and he could speak with them.

Contrast to the limitations that some commentators have cited for the Qur'anic sentence:

"...we have been granted of every thing...",

it has a vast meaning and it concludes all physical and spiritual means which were necessary for the formation of that Divine government and, basically, without it this statement will be imperfect.

By the way, Allah has given some special knowledge to some particular persons and He has mentioned them in the Qur'an:

1- Adam had the knowledge of all things:

"And He taught Adam all the names..."[9]

2- Khidr knew the inward knowledge and interpretation (so that Moses could be his student:

"...'Shall I follow you that you teach me right conduct..."[10]

3- Yusuf was taught the knowledge of interpretation of dreams:

"...this is of what my Lord has taught me..."[11]

4- David was taught by Allah the knowledge of making the coat of mail:

"And We taught him the art of making the coat of mail..."[12]

5- Solomon knew the language of birds:

"...We have been taught the language of the birds..."[13]

6- 'Asif Burkhiya (Solomon's assistant) had the knowledge by which he could bring the royal throne (of

the Queen of Sheba) from one country to another country:

"One with whom was some knowledge (of a part) of the (Divine) Book said..." 14

7- Talut knew the knowledge of army:

"...'Verily Allah has chosen him over you, and He has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature..." 15

8- The holy Prophet (S) and other prophets had the knowledge of Unseen:

"...so He does not reveal His secrets to any,"
"Except to whom He chooses as an apostle..." 16

It is for this reason that it has been said that the prophets' knowledge is 'an intuitive knowledge' and it is bestowed on them through inspiration by Allah.

Some Points

1- The Relation Between Religion and Politics

Contrast to what some short sighted persons think, religion is not only a collection of advice or affairs concerning to the private and personal life. Religion is a collection of some general and common laws of life and common programs which conclude the whole life of men and social issues in particular.

The appointment of prophets to their missions is for the settlement of justice and equity. 17

Religion is for breaking the chains of captivity of men and providing the freedom of human beings. 18

Religion is the cause of securing the oppressed from the grips of oppressors and tyrants, and putting an end to the course of their sovereignty.

Finally, religion is a collection of education, and training men along the path of purification and making them complete. 19

It is evident that earning these great aims without having a government is impossible. Who can establish justice with mere ethical recommendations so that he stops the domination of the oppressors over the oppressed?

Who can break and take the chains of captivity from the hands and feet of those who are afflicted in it without being supported by a power?

In a society where the means of spreading culture and propagation are in the hands of the vicious and mischief-makers, who can settle the correct principles of education, and foster the morals in the hearts?

That is why we say that 'religion' and 'politics' are two inseparable elements. If religion separates from politics it totally loses its arm of execution, and if politics separates from religion it will be changed into a destructive element which moves along the path of its interests.

If the Prophet of Islam (S) succeeded to spread this Divine religion quickly in the world, it was because, at the first opportunity, he started to form a government and by means of the Islamic government he pursued the divine aims.

Some other divine prophets who could do like that and succeeded, were able to spread the Divine call better, while some others of them who were in difficulties and the conditions did not let them to form a government, did not succeed to progress very much.

2- The Divine Government and its Means

It is interesting that in the life story of Solomon and David we clearly see that they succeeded to quickly root out the effects of polytheism and idolatry and to establish a government whose main means, according to the concerning verses, was knowledge and awareness in various fields.

It was a system that Allah's Name was at the top of its programs. This system used to apply all the eligible powers and used even the ability of a bird for reaching its aims.

It was a system that could control all devils and dominated over the oppressors.

And, finally, it was a system which had both enough military force and elements of information, and some persons who had sufficient awareness and skill in different fields, and it had gathered all of these elements under the camp of belief and Monotheism.

3- The Birds' Speech

In the above verse and the verses which will come later in the story of hoopoe and Solomon, the birds' speech and the kind of their sense and understanding are referred to explicitly.

No doubt that birds, like other animals, in different circumstances make some various sounds that, with careful observation, we can recognize their states and situations by the kind of that sound and say which sound indicates to their anger, which one to their content, which sound is the reason of their hunger, and which one shows their whining.

We can understand with which sound the animal calls its children and with which sound it warns them of coming a horrible event. This part of the birds' sound contains no doubt and all of us are, more or less, acquainted with it.

But the holy verses of this Surah apparently intend to say something beyond this matter. They talk about a kind of animal speaking in a secret way which carries some more minute subjects in it. They talk about

understanding and a debate between birds and a human being.

This meaning is surprising for some persons, but regarding to the various matters that the scientists have written in their books and the personal observation, and experiences that some other persons had concerning birds, it is not so surprising.

We know some matters even more surprising than this in relation with the talent of animals, and birds in particular.

Some of them are so skilful in making houses and nests for them that they exceed our engineers.

Some of birds possess so much exact information about their future offspring and their needs and difficulties and they act so minutely concerning their salvation that is surprising for all of us.

Their foresight about the circumstance of weather, even from some months before, their awareness of earthquakes before they occur and even before that our seismographs record the slightest quakes are well known.

The training with which some animals are trained in our time, and the extraordinary jobs they do and many people have seen them in many circuses all denote to their wonderful intelligence. The marvelous acts of 'ants' and their wonderful civilization; the marvels of the life of bees and their amazing finding the traces are famous.

The recognition of the emigrating birds, which sometimes pave the distance between North Pole and South Pole, and their awareness of the circumstances of the ways along this extraordinary long traveling are wonderful.

The amazing information about Salmon-trout, when they emigrate in groups in deep sees, are generally some subjects that scientifically are certain and are reasons for the existence of an important stage of apprehension, or instinct, or whatever we may call, in these animals.

The existence of some extraordinary senses in animals, such as the system of radar in a bat, very strong sense of smell in some insects, the extraordinary extensive power of sight in some birds, and so on, are also some other evidences for the fact that they are not weaker than us in anything.

Keeping these things in mind, it does not seem wonderful that they have a special speech, too, and can speak with the person who is aware of the method of their talking.

In the verses of the Qur'an, there are also some different points which refer to this meaning.

For example, Surah Al-'An'am, No. 6, verse 38 says:

"And there is no creature (***that walks***) ***on the earth nor a bird that flies with its two wings, but they are communities the like of you..."***

In Islamic narrations there are a lot of traditions which refer to the animals' speech and that of the birds, and even for each of them there have been cited some popular statements whose explanation is very long.

Imam Sadiq (as) in a narration said that Imam Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as) once told Ibn-'Abbas:

"Verily Allah taught us the birds' speech as He taught Solomon, son of David, as well as the speech of every living creature in the land and sea."[20]

4- The Explanation of a Tradition

There has been recorded a tradition in some different books of Sunnites from the Prophet of Islam (S) which denotes:

"We prophets do not leave any heritage, and whatever we leave must be used as alms (in the way of Allah)."

Sometimes this very tradition has been cited in a form that its first sentence is omitted, like this:

"Whatever we leave must be used as alms (in the way of Allah)."

The document of this tradition in those books is often ended to Abubakr who took the rein of Muslims' affairs after the Prophet (S), and when Hadrat Fatimah (as) or some other wives of the Prophet (S) demanded Abubakr their inheritance, relying upon this narration, he did not give them any inheritance.

This tradition is recorded by 'Muslim' in his Sahih, Vol. 3, P. 13790, by Bukhari, in Kitab-ul-Fara'id, chapter 8, P. 185, and some others have recorded it in their own books.

It is worthy to note that in the latter document, through a tradition narrated by 'Ayishah, we read as follows:

"(After the death of the Prophet (S)), Fatimah and 'Abbas came to 'Abubakr and demanded their heritage remained from the Prophet (S). At that time they demanded their land in 'Fadak' and their share 'remained from Kheybar'.

'Abubakr said:

'I heard from the Messenger of Allah who said:

'We do not leave any heritage, and whatever we leave is alms'.'

When Fatimah heard this statement she angrily left 'Abubakr and she never spoke with him, even for one word, until the end of her life."[21]

This tradition, of course, from different dimensions is objectionable and can be investigated, but what

can be said in short here is as follows:

1- This tradition is not consistent with the verses of the text of the Qur'an, and according to the laws and principles we have, every tradition which does not adapt to 'the Book of Allah' is invalid and it cannot be taken as the tradition originated from the Prophet (S) or other immaculate ones (as).

In the above-mentioned holy verse, we read that Solomon inheritance David, and the apparent of the verse is general and it concludes properties, too.

Concerning Yahya and Zechariah we read in the Qur'an:

*"(**One that**) **shall be my inheritor and the inheritor of the posterity of Jacob**..."*[22]

Especially in respect to Zechariah, many commentators have emphasized on financial aspects.

Moreover, the apparent of the verses about inheritance in the Qur'an is general and envelops all. Maybe, it was for the same reason that Qurtabi, the famous Sunnite Commentator, had to take the tradition as the strong verb and the most, not as a general one.

He has said that: this is like the sentence that Arabs say:

"We community of Arabs are the most hospital ones among people, (while it is not a general ordinance)."[23]

But it is clear that this statement nullifies the value of this tradition, because if we take this excuse for the case of Solomon and Yahya, other aspects that are concluded in it are not certain either.

2- The above mentioned tradition is in contrast with other narrations which show that 'Abubakr decided to return Fadak to Fatimah, but some others hindered it, as it is cited in Sirah Halabi:

"Fatimah, the Prophet's daughter, came to 'Abubakr while he was on the pulpit.

She said:

"O 'Abubakr! Is the matter in the Book of Allah that your daughter inherits from you but I do not inherit from my father?"

'Abubakr wept and shed tears. Then he came down of the pulpit, and wrote a later indicating that Fadak was turned back to Fatimah (as).

At this time 'Umar entered and said:

"What is this?"

'Abubakr said:

“I wrote a letter to return the inheritance of Fatimah from her father to her.’

‘Umar said:

“If you do this, where from do you obtain the expenditure of the fight with the enemies, now that Arabs have stood against you?”

Then ‘Umar caught the letter and tore it.”[24]

How could there be an explicit prohibition issued by the Prophet (S) and Abubakr would dare to oppose it? And why did ‘Umar rely upon the needs of fight and did not rely on Prophet’s tradition?

Careful studying the above-mentioned narration shows that the Prophet’s prohibition was not in contemplation, the important thing, here, was the political issues of the time.

These are the things that remind one the statement of Ibn-’Abil-Hadid Mu‘tazily who said:

“I asked my teacher, Ali-ibn-Fariqi,

‘Was Fatimah (as) right in her claim?’

He answered:

‘Yes.’

I said:

‘Why did not ’Abubakr give Fadak to her while he counted her a truthful one?’

My teacher smiled with a very meaningful smile and expressed a beautiful smooth statement, though he did not customarily joke.

He said:

“If today he gave Fadak to her, she would come the following day and claimed the caliphate for her husband, and she would unsettle him of his position, and he had neither any excuse to say nor any thing to agree with.”[25]

3- A Famous Tradition from the Prophet (S)

In many books of great sects of Islam, there is recorded a famous tradition which says:

“The scholars are the heirs of the prophets.”[26]

It is also narrated from the Prophet (S) who said:

"Verily the prophets did not leave any Dinar nor Dirham (*drachma*) *as heritage."*[27]

It seems from these two traditions that the main aim has been to make it clear that the capital and the honour of the Divine prophets had been their knowledge.

The most important thing that they left behind was the issue of guidance, and those who earned some larger share from this knowledge are the essential heirs of prophets, without that they seek for the properties remained from the prophets.

Later this tradition has been paraphrased and has been misused by corruption in transmission, and probably the Arabic phrase /mataraknahu sadaqatun/ (whatever we leave must be used as alms (in the way of Allah)), which had been understood from some narrations, has been added to it.

To shorten our discussion, we conclude this statement with an explanation from Fakhr-i-Razi, the famous commentator of Sunnites, who has cited about Surah An-Nisa', No. 4, verse 11.

He says that one of the allotments that has been set for this verse (the verse of children's heritage) is what is the majority of the jurisprudents of Sunnites believe and it indicates that prophets (as) do not leave any thing as heritage, while Shi'ite have (generally) opposed this matter.

It has been narrated that when Fatimah (as) demanded her heritage, they deprived her from it attaching to the Prophet's tradition which says:

"We prophets do not leave any heritage, and whatever we leave must he used as alms (*in the way of Allah*)*"*

At this time Fatimah (*as*) *reasoned to the generality of the above mentioned verse* (*the verse of children's heritage*) *as if she wanted to point to this fact that the whole Qur'an cannot be appropriated with a single narration."*

Then, Fakhr-i-Razi adds:

"Shi'ites say that supposing that allotment of the Qur'an be permissible with a single narration, it is not permissible here because of following three reasons:

1. This contrasts the explicit text of the Qur'an which says that Zechariah asked Allah to give him a child who could inherit from him and the posterity of Jacob. And also the Qur'an says that Solomon inherited from David.

These verses cannot be rendered into the heritage of 'knowledge' and 'religion', since this is a kind of figurative heredity and these prophets taught knowledge and religion to their children, not that they took it from themselves and transferred it to them. The real heritage is considered only in wealth (*that it be taken from one and be given to another*)*.*

2. Another matter is that how is it possible that 'Abubakr could be aware of this subject, which he did not need, but Fatimah (as), Abbas, and Ali (as), who were of the greatest virtuous and knowledgeable ones and were dealing with the issue of the Prophet's heritage, were not aware of it?

How could it be possible that the Prophet (S) taught this tradition to the one who did not need it and restrained it from the one who needed it?

3. The Arabic phrase /ma taraknahu sadaqah/ (whatever we leave must be used as alms (in the way of Allah) is next to the Arabic phrase /la nuwarri/ which means: the properties we have set apart for the purpose of alms do not come inside the circle of heritage, not other than that..."

Then, Fakhr-i-Razi gives a short answer to the above-mentioned known reasoning and says:

*"After speaking with Abubakr, Fatimah (as) became content with that speaking. Besides, the consensus has reached to this that the word of Abubakr is right."*28

But it is clear that the answer of Fakhr-i-Razi is not sufficient for the abovementioned reasoning, because, as was narrated from the Sunnite famous sources, Fatimah (as) not only was not contented but she was so angry that she did not speak even for a word with Abubakr until the end of her life.

Moreover, how could there be a consensus upon this subject while Ali, Fatimah (as) and Abbas, who had been trained in the center of revelation, had opposed it?

Surah An-Naml - Verse 17

وَحُشِرَ لِسُلَيْمَـانَ جُنُودُهُ مِنَ الْجِنّ وَالإِنسِ وَالطَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ

17. "And gathered together unto Solomon his hosts of jinn and men and birds and they were kept in order and ranks."

In different occasions the Qur'an has talked about jinn and one of the suras of the Qur'an is also called Jinn.

Now, here, it refers to some of their qualities:

Jinn is a creature which has sensation and has been addressed by Allah, where the Qur'an says:

"O' assembly of the jinn and mankind!..."29

Some of Jinn are believers while some others of them are disbelievers. They are male and female and naturally they have venereal desire.

Some of them worked for Solomon as builders and divers, as the Qur'an says:

“And the Satans, (including) every builder and diver.”[30]

It is understood from the verses of the current Surah and those of Surah Saba’, No. 34, that the government of Solomon had not an ordinary circumstance but it was formed by some extraordinary events and various miracles, some of which are mentioned in this Surah (like Solomon’s governing over Jinn and birds), recognition of the talk of ants, and speaking with ‘Hoopoe’, and another part of it has been mentioned in Surah Saba’, No. 34.

In fact, Allah showed His Might in making appear this great government and the forces it possessed; and we know that, from the view point of a monotheist, these affairs are easy, simple and untroubled for Allah, the Mighty.

By this verse, the Qur’an says:

“And gathered together unto Solomon his hosts of jinn and men and birds…”

The number of his forces was so large that, in order to regulate the army, it was ordered that the primary rows of forces should stop until when the last rows could move and reach others.

The verse continues saying:

“…and they were kept in order and ranks.”

The Qur’anic word ***/yuza‘un/*** is derived from /waza‘a/ in the sense of ‘to restrain, to hold back’. When this word is used in respect to army it means that the first part of the army should be stopped until the ending part of it joins, and they would not be divided.

The Arabic word /waza‘/ is also applied in the sense of ‘avarice, and intensive interest’ so that it hinders man from other affairs.

It is understood from this application that the forces of Solomon were both abundant and they worked under a special order.

The Qur’anic word ***/hušira/*** is derived from /hašr/ which means: ‘bringing out the crowd of army from the resting place’, and causing them to start toward the battle-field, and the like. It is understood from both this meaning and the meaning used in the next verse that Solomon had led an army to a place, but it is not quite clear that which one it is among Solomon’s military expeditions.

Taking the content of the next verse in mind, which speaks about reaching Solomon to the land of ants, some say that it had been a region near Ta’if, while some others have said it had been a land near Syria.

However, since the statement of this matter had not any effect from the point of ethical and educational aspects, it has not been spoken of.

By the way, some commentators have discussed whether the whole human beings, jinn, and birds were the army of Solomon, or a part of them formed his army. This discussion seems rather needless, because undoubtedly Solomon did not govern the whole earth and the realm of his government was Syria, Jerusalem, and probably some other lands around there.

It is also understood from the later verses that Solomon had not any dominion over Yemen at that time, and he gained his authority over there after the event of 'hoopoe' and the submission of the Queen of Sheba.

The Qur'anic phrase ***/tafaqqad-at-tayr/***, mentioned in the coming verses, shows that among the birds, which were in the obedience of Solomon, there was a hoopoe that when Solomon did not see it over there he asked about it. If all birds were included and there were thousands of hoopoes among them, this meaning could not be correct. (Be careful)

Surah An-Naml - Verse 18

حَتَّي إِذَآ أَتَوْا عَلَي وَادِ الَّنملِ قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَآ أَيُّهَا النَّـمْلُ ادْخُلُوا مَسَاكِنَكُمْ لاَ يَحْطِمَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَـانُ وَجُنُودُهُ وَهُمْ لاَيَشْعُرُونَ

18. "Until when they came to the Valley of Ants, an ant said: 'O you ants! Get into your habitations, so that Solomon and his hosts may not crush you, being unaware'."

The Arabic word /naml/ philologically means 'creeping with small feet'. The Qur'anic word ***/namlatun/***, because of its Arabic nunnation, can be meant 'a big ant which is a commander'. In this case, there is commandership and administrationship in the life of ants.

This nunnation can be meant as the sign of uncertainty of the ant. In this case, the message of the verse is that if an undefined one gives a sympathetic warning that warning must be attended to.

However, Solomon with this great army started and went until they reached the valley of ants. Here, an ant, addressing other ants, said that they should go into their dwellings, so that Solomon and his army might not crush them while they are unaware.

The verse says:

"Until when they came to the Valley of Ants, an ant said: 'O you ants! Get into your habitations, so that Solomon and his hosts may not crush you, being unaware'."

There are some explanations to say that how this ant became aware of the presence of Solomon and his hosts in that land, and how it announced this happening to other ants, which will be referred to later.

By the way, it is understood from this sentence that the justice of Solomon was made manifest to even

the ants because the sentence implicitly means if the hosts are aware of the existence of the ants they will not tread that weak animal, then if they tread the ants it is because they do not know it.

Surah An-Naml – Verse 19

فَتَبَسَّمَ ضَاحِكاً مِن قَوْلِهَا وَقَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَى وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحاً تَرْضَاهُ وَأَدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ

19. "Then he smiled, laughing at its words, and said: 'My Lord! Dispose me that I may be thankful for Your bounty, which You have bestowed on me and my parents, and that I may do righteousness such as You are pleased with, and admit me, by Your mercy, among Your righteous servants'."

One of the principles and conditions of leadership and administration is tolerance. Solomon (as) heard that the ant said about him and his troops that they were unaware, but he (as) did not show it and he only smiled.

Criticism and a right speech must be heard from any one and it must be received, because accepting criticism is a value. Solomon admired the word of the ant and smiled. Commentators are divided as for what was the cause of Solomon's smile.

It appears that the self of this event was a wonderful matter that an ant called other ants to beware of the great army of Solomon and that it attributed that army of being unaware.

This amazing affair caused Solomon's laugh, as the verse says:

"Then he smiled, laughing at its words..."

Some of commentators have said that this smile was a smile of joy, because Solomon understood that even ants confessed to the justice of Solomon and his troops and accepted their piety.

Some others have said that his joy was for the reason that Allah had given him such a power that at the time of the great anxiety and excitement of the army he was not neglectful of the sound of an ant either.

However, here Solomon turned to the presence of Allah and asked a few things as follows:

"...and said: 'My Lord! Dispose me that I may be thankful for Your bounty, which You have bestowed on me and my parents..."

Solomon asked Allah to teach him how he could thank for the great bounties that He had granted him and his parents to be able to use them in the way that He had commanded and was the cause of His pleasure so that he would not deviate from the right path, since being thankful for those abundant

favours is not possible save with His succour and aid.

The next thing he asked for was as follows:

"...and that I may do righteousness such as You are pleased with..."

This statement points to this matter that what was important for Solomon was not the remaining of that great army and his government with those vast organizations, it was important for him to do such righteous deeds that caused His pleasure.

And in view of the fact that the Arabic word /'a'mala/ is a verb in present tense, which is used in that language for the continuation of the action, it is an evidence that he asked Allah for the continuation of this succour.

Finally, the third thing he asked was that he said:

"...and admit me, by Your mercy, among Your righteous servants'."

Surah An-Naml - Verses 20-22

وَتَفَقَّدَ الطَّيْرَ فَقَالَ مَالِيَ لاَ أَرَي الْهُدْهُدَ أَمْ كَانَ مِنَ الْغَآئِبِينَ

لأُعَذِّبَنَّهُ عَذَاباً شَدِيداً أَوْ لاَذبَحَنَّهُ أَوْ لَيَأْتِيَنّي بِسُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ

فَمَكَثَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطتُ بِمَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ وَجِئْتُكَ مِن سَبإٍ بِنَبَإٍ يَقِينٍ

20. "And he reviewed the birds; then he said: 'How is it with me that I do not see the hoopoe? Or is it that he is of the absentees?'"
21. "Certainly will I chastise him with a terrible chastisement, or will I slaughter him, or he brings me a clear reason (for his absence)."
22. "But the hoopoe tarried not long, then he (came and) said: 'I have comprehended that which you have not comprehended, and I have come to you from Sheba with a sure tiding'."

Through this group of verses, the Qur'an has pointed to another height of the amazing life of Solomon, and reiterates the event of hoopoe, and the Queen of Sheba. At first it speaks about Solomon (as) and hoopoe, whom he (as) sought after but he did not see it.

The verse says:

"And he reviewed the birds..."

This phrase clearly indicates that Solomon (as) was carefully observing the circumstances of the country and his government in a manner that even the absence of a bird was not concealed before his eyes.

No doubt that the purpose of the bird, here, is the hoopoe, since in the continuation of the statement the Qur'an adds:

"...then he said: 'How is it with me that I do not see the hoopoe?..."
"...Or is it that he is of the absentees?'"

Concerning the fact that how Solomon recognized that hoopoe was not present among the gathering of birds, some commentators have said: that it was for the sake that, at the time of his traveling, birds did cast a shadow over his head and, because of the existence of an opening (hole) in that vast canopy, he found out the absence of the hoopoe.

Some others have considered a mission for the hoopoe in his organizations and they have said that the hoopoe was commissioned to find the places where there was water and when the bird had gone to search for water, he (as) found it absent.

However, this statement that at first he said:

"...I do not see the hoopoe..."

and then he added

"...Or is it that he is of the absentees..."

may point to this matter that whether the hoopoe is absent without having a plausible excuse or it has been absent with a plausible excuse.

An way, an organized, ordered, and powerful government has to put all movements, activities, and actions and reactions that happen in its country and realm under consideration; and it must not neglect even the presence and absence of a bird, an ordinary agent, and this is a great lesson.

Finally, some other commentators have said that the objective of hoopoe, here, is a particular 'Hoopoe'. Their reference is the existence of Alif and Lam at the beginning of the Arabic word, 'Al-Hudhud', as well as the hoopoe's power of anthropology and its theological ability. The explanation of this meaning will be offered later.[31]

Once Abuhanifah asked Imam Sadiq (as):

"Why did Solomon ask only about hoopoe among all birds?"

The Imam (as) said:

“Its reason is for the fact that a hoopoe sees the existence of water inside the earth, the same as we see oil in a crystal container.”[32]

As for the punishment of the hoopoe, some commentators have mentioned a few examples; including separating it from its fellow, pulling off its feathers, putting it under sunshine, banishing it from Solomon’s court, or putting it in the same cage with an enemy.[33]

One point, however, must be noted that reviewing and being kind to inferiors, visiting their work, and asking about their affairs are among the Islamic, ethical, social, educational, and administrative principles.

Then, in order not to judge in its absence, and in the mean-while the absence of the hoopoe does not affect other birds, still less the persons who undertook some sensitive and important jobs, Solomon added:

***“Certainly will I chastise him with a terrible chastisement, or will I slaughter him, or he brings me a clear reason** (**for his absence**).”*

The purpose of the Arabic word /sultan/, here, is a reason which causes one’s authority and ability to prove one’s mind, and the Arabic word /mubin/ is an emphasis on the matter that this faulty one must certainly bring a clear reason for his own fault.

Solomon (as), in fact, without judging in its absence, threatened the offender by the necessary chastisement if the fault is proved. He even considered two stages for his threat in order that it could be proportional to the kind of the sin: the stage of punishment without execution, and the stage of execution.

By the way, he showed that he surrendered to proof and logic even in front of a weak bird and he would never rely on his power and abilities.

“But the hoopoe tarried not long...”

The hoopoe returned and, addressing Solomon, said that it had known something which he (as) did not know and it was an assured news from the land of Sheba.

The verse says:

*“...**then he** (**came and**) **said: ‘I have comprehended that which you have not comprehended, and I have come to you from Sheba with a sure tiding’.**”*

As if the hoopoe has seen the signs of anger in Solomon’s face. Then, in order to remove his distress, the bird shortly and closely announced of an important matter that Solomon, even with his whole knowledge, was not aware of it. Then, when the anger of Solomon was lightened, Hoopoe began

explaining it, which will be described through later verses.

It is worthy nothing that Solomon's troops, and even the birds that obeyed him, had felt such a freedom, security, and daring in Solomon's justice that, without any fear Hoopoe frankly and explicitly says:

"...'I have comprehended that which you have not comprehended..."

The Hoopoe's treatment with Solomon was not like the treatment of the flattering men of courts with the tyrannical kings, who, for communicating a fact at first flatter and make themselves so low before them as an insignificant atom.

Then they humbly state their aim inside many sorts of flatteries and never try to deliver a definite statement; so they always use some delicate allusions lest the king's feeling be a little injured.

Yes, the hoopoe clearly said that its absence was not unreasonable and he had brought Solomon some news that he was not aware of it.

By the way, this meaning is a great lesson for all human beings that there may be a small creature, like hoopoe, which knows a matter that the most knowledgeable man of the people of the time is unaware of it; and no one should be proud of his knowledge even he is Solomon with that vast knowledge of prophecy.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 23-24

إِنّـِي وَجَدتُّ امْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ

وَجَدتُّهَا وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لاَيَهْتَدُونَ

23. "Verily I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given of everything, and she possesses a magnificent throne."
24. "I found her and her people prostrating to the sun instead of Allah, and Satan has made their deeds fair-seeming to them and he has barred them from the (right) way, so they are not guided aright."

However, Hoopoe explained the event of going to the land of Sheba and its Queen under the name of Bilqiys, as follows:

"Verily I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given of everything, and she possesses a magnificent throne."

By these three short sentences, the hoopoe told Solomon nearly all qualifications of the country of

Sheba and that how it was governed. First of all, it said that it was a habitable country with all kinds of merits and potentialities.

The next matter was that a woman was ruling over there who had a very glorious court, perhaps even more glorious than the organizations of Solomon, since though the hoopoe had certainly seen Solomon's throne it mentioned that of the Queen as 'a magnificent throne'.

By this speech, the hoopoe made Solomon understand that he should not think that the entire world was in the realm of his government and that the great throne and magnificence was allocated only to him.

By hearing this news, Solomon began contemplating, but the hoopoe did not give him time and added another amazing matter, when it said:

"I found her and her people prostrating to the sun instead of Allah..."

The Hoopoe explains that Satan has dominated over them and has so ornamented their deeds to them that they boast of worshipping the sun, and thus Satan has hindered them from the right way and they have so engaged in idolatry that I do not believe they return easily from that way.

The verse continues saying:

"...and Satan has made their deeds fair-seeming to them and he has barred them from the (right) way, so they are not guided aright."

In this way, the hoopoe made clear the spiritual and religious situation of those people and announced that they had earnestly fallen in idolatry, and their government encouraged them to adorring the sun, so people usually follow the religion of their kings.

Their idol temples and their other circumstances show that they insist on paving this wrong way: they like it and they boast of it. In the conditions that both the whole people and government are wrongly on one line, their guidance is very improbable.

That marvellous story indicates that some animals possess a high understanding, such as hoopoe who understood and realized some concepts, like: man and woman, crown and throne, government and ownership, monotheism and idolatry, sun and prostration, Satan and his ornamentations, right and wrong, guidance and misguidance.

Surah An-Naml - Verses 25-26

أَلاَّ يَسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي يُخْرِجُ الْخَبْءَ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُخْفُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ

اللَّهُ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

25. "So that they prostrate not themselves to Allah, Who brings forth what is hidden in the heavens and the earth and knows what you hide and what you reveal."
26. "Allah, there is no god but He! Is the Lord of 'Arsh, the Mighty (throne of Supreme Authority)."

The Arabic word /xab'/ means 'concealed and hidden'.

Ali (as) Says:

*"(The value of) man is hidden under his tongue."*34

The growth of plants, as well as falling rains, are the clear examples of bringing forth those which are hidden in the heavens and the earth.

The ears (of corn) are hidden inside a corn and the Might of Allah brings it forth from inside of it. All the things that alter from potentiality to actuality are the extensions of this very verse.

However, it says:

"So that they prostrate not themselves to Allah, Who brings forth what is hidden in the heavens and the earth and knows what you hide and what you reveal."

The Qur'anic word ***/xab'/***, which means anything hidden and concealed, here points to the omnipotence of Allah's knowledge due to the unseen of heavens and earth.

Thus, the verse means why they do not prostrate themselves to the Lord Who knows the unseen of the heavens and the earth and the secrets hidden in them.

Some commentators have rendered it to rain (respecting the heavens) and plants (respecting the earth), this in fact, is from the kind of statement of a clear extension.

Alike them are those commentators who have commented this phrase upon 'bringing out the creatures from the unseen of nonexistence into existence'.

It is interesting that the holy verse firstly speaks of the knowledge of Allah unto 'the secrets hidden in the heavens and the earth', and then it refers to the secrets concealed in the hearts of people.

Why the hoopoe, among all attributes of Allah (s.w.t.), emphasized on the issue of His knowledge due to unseen and seen in the macrocosm and microcosm, it may be in relation to the fact that Solomon, with all his abilities and knowledge, was not aware of the country of Sheba and its qualities, and it says that we must seek the grace of the Lord for Whom nothing is concealed.

Or it is in relation to the known matter which is said that hoopoe has a special sense by which it can

understand the existence of water inside the land that contains it. Then it speaks of Allah Who is aware of all the things which are concealed in the world of existence.

At last, the hoopoe concludes his saying with the following statement:

"Allah, there is no god but He! Is the Lord of 'Arsh, the Mighty* (*throne of Supreme Authority*)*."

Thus, the hoopoe emphasized on 'unity of worship' and 'Unity of Lordship' of Allah and the negation of any polytheism, and then put an end to his speech.

By the way, what is cited in this part of the verse contains a lot of points which can be effective in the life of all human beings and in the process of all governments.

1- The chief of a government, or an administrator, must be so careful and aware of the order of his organizations that he recognizes and realizes even the absence of an ordinary and insignificant member, and pursues its affairs.

2- He must be careful of the offence of a single member and, in order not to affect others, he must apply the necessary precautions.

3- No one should be judged in his absence, or to pass a judgment by default. The one should be allowed to defend himself if possible.

4- The amount of forfeit must proportionate to the crime. So, for every crime a suitable punishment must be decided, and hierarchy should be observed, too.

5- Everybody, even the greatest powers of the society, must submit to reason and logic though the reason is uttered by a very insignificant person.

6- There must exist so much freedom and explicitness in the atmosphere of the society that, at the necessary time, even an ordinary person can tell the chief of the government:

"I have comprehended that which you have not comprehended."[35]

7- Sometimes some ordinary persons or the smallest ones get information of something that the greatest scientists and the most powerful ones are unaware of it, and we must never be proud of our knowledge.

8- In the society of human beings, the reciprocal needs are so much so that sometimes some great men, such as Solomon, are dependant on a bird.

9- Though there are many eligibilities in women, and even this very story shows that the Queen of Sheba possessed an extraordinary understanding and perspicacity, the leadership of a government is not consistent with the situation of their spirit and body; so the hoopoe also surprised of it and said:

“Verily I found a woman ruling over them…”[36]

10– People often have the same religion that their rulers have.

Therefore, we read in this story that the hoopoe says:

“I found her and her people prostrating to the sun…”

(The words are first about the prostration of the Queen and then that of the people.)

قَالَ سَنَنظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ أَمْ كُنتَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴾27﴿

اذْهَب بِكِتَابِي هَذَا فَأَلْقِهْ إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَانظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴾28﴿

27. “(Solomon, after hearing hoopoe’s information,) said: ‘Soon we will see whether you have told the truth or whether you are of the liars.”
28. “Go you with this letter of mine, and throw it down unto them, then turn away from them, and (wait to) see what (answer) they return.”

The Divine prophets’ communication and writing letters to disbelievers and polytheists has a long background, and the Prophet of Islam (S) did it, too. He (S) wrote some letters to the rulers of several countries, such as Iran and Byzantine.

In order to reach to some leading and cultural aims, sending messages, advisors, cultural counselors, officers, and taking the lead in these affairs had been the conduct of the divine prophets.

Of course, when confronting some complicated systems and governments, we cannot encounter them simply, and, thus, recognizing them secretly and far from the eyes is the deepest kind of cognitions.

Therefore, Solomon carefully listened to the words of the hoopoe and began thinking. Solomon might mostly thought that that news was right, and there was no reason for it to be a lie so great.

But since it was not a simple issue and it related to the fate of a country and a great nation, he should not suffice only to the statement of a single informer, and he ought to investigate more about this sensitive subject.

Thus, the Qur’an announces:

“(Solomon, after hearing hoopoe’s information,) said: ‘Soon we will see whether you have told the truth or whether you are of the liars.”

This statement clearly proves that for important matters, which relate to the fate of people, one must pay

attention to the information received from a simple member and soon it must be sufficiently researched about.

Solomon did neither accuse nor condemn hoopoe, nor did he verify its speech without any proof, but he took it as the cause of a research.

He said:

"Go you with this letter of mine, and throw it down unto them, then turn away from them, and (***wait to***) ***see what*** (***answer***) ***they return."***

Surah An-Naml - Verses 29-31

قَالَتْ يَآ أَيُّهَا الْمَلَؤُا إِنِّي أُلْقِيَ إِلَيَّ كِتَابٌ كَرِيمٌ

إِنَّهُ مِن سُلَيْمَانَ وَإِنَّهُ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَلاَّ تَعْلُوا عَلَيَّ وَأْتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ

29. "(***When the Queen of Sheba received the letter,***) ***she said: 'O chiefs! Verily there has been thrown unto me a noble letter."***
30. "Verily, it is from Solomon; and verily it is: 'In the Name of Allah. The Beneficent, the Merciful'."
31. "Exalt not yourselves against me, and come to me in submission."

Guidance and preaching must be delivered kindly and mercifully; beginning with the holy phrase:

'In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful'.

Solomon (as) wrote a very short and comprehensive letter and, giving it to the hoopoe, he told the bird to throw it down unto them and then return and wait in a corner to see what reaction they would have.

It is understood from the Qur'anic phrase "***Throw it down unto them***" that the hoopoe should throw it down when the Queen of Sheba was sitting in the gathering among her people so that there would remain no room for forsaking and denying it.

This also makes it clear that there is no proof for the commentary of some commentators who have said the hoopoe entered the castle of the Queen of Sheba and her room and threw the letter on her chest or her throat, though it is not so inconsistent with the sentence mentioned in the next verse which says:

"...Verily there has been thrown unto me a noble letter."

The Queen of Sheba opened the letter and was informed of its content. Since she had formerly heard of the fame of Solomon and the content of the letter indicated that he had taken a severe decision about the country of Sheba, she fell into a deep thought; and since she used to consult with the chiefs of her entourage, she invited them.

As the Qur'an says:

*"(**When the Queen of Sheba received the letter,**) **she said: 'O chiefs! Verily there has been thrown unto me a noble letter."***

Had the Queen of Sheba truly not seen the bringer of the letter? But, with the content of the letter, she felt the nobility of the letter and she never thought that it might be a fabricated letter.

Or she saw the letter with her own eyes, and its surprising circumstance proved that there was a reality over there and it was not an ordinary thing. Whatever it was, she relied on the letter with certainty.

The matter that the Queen says that the letter is a noble and worthy one, may be for the magnificent content of it, or for its beginning which began with the name of Allah, and its ending was correctly signed and sealed;[37] or its sender had been a noble person, each of which has been guessed by the commentators.

Or all of them may be found in this consistent concept, because there is no contradictory between them.

It is true that they were sun-worshippers, but we know that many of the idolaters believed in Allah, too, and called Him as the Lord of lords. They counted His respect and glorification important.

Then, the Queen of Sheba referred to the content of the letter when she said:

"Verily, it is from Solomon; and verily it is: 'In the Name of Allah. The Beneficent, the Merciful'." "Exalt not yourselves against me, and come to me in submission."

It is not probable that Solomon had written the letter with these very Arabic phrases; therefore the above-mentioned phrases can be paraphrased, or they are the summary of Solomon's letter that the Queen of Sheba reiterated for her people.

It is interesting that the content of this letter was indeed not more than three sentences: one sentence was the name of Allah, and the statement of His attributes of mercifulness and compassionateness.

The second sentence was a recommendation for controlling the low desire and abundance of self-superiority, which is the origin of many personal and social corruptions.

And the third one was to submit to the truth. And if we carefully notice them, there was nothing more

which was necessary to be mentioned.

1. Surah Sad, No. 38, verse 20
2. Surah Al-'Anbiya', No. 21, verse 79
3. The Current Surah, verse 16
4. Surah Al-'Anbiya', No. 21, verse 80
5. Surah Sad, No. 38, verse 20
6. Surah Al-'Anbiya', No. 21, verse 79
7. 'Ihtijaj by Tabarsi, Vol. 4, P. 75
8. Surah Al-Jathiyah, No. 45, verse 29
9. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 31
10. Surah Al-Kahf, No. 18, verse 66
11. Surah Yusuf, No. 12, verse 37
12. Surah Al-'Anbiya', No. 21, verse 80
13. Surah An-Naml, No. 27, verse 16
14. Surah An-Naml, No. 27, verse 40
15. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 247
16. Surah Al-Jinn, No. 72, verses 26-27
17. Surah Al-Hadid, No. 57, verse 25
18. Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 157
19. Surah Al-Jumu'ah, No. 62, verse 2
20. The commentaries of As-Safi, and Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, the explanation of the verse
21. Sahih Bukhari, Part 8, P. 185
22. Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 6
23. Tafsir Qurtabi, Vol. 7, P. 4880
24. Sirah Halabi, Vol. 3, P. 301
25. The explanation of Nahj-ul-Balaqah, by 'Ibn-'Abil-Hadid, Vol. 16, P. 284
26. Sahih Tarmathi, Chapter knowledge, Tradition No. 19; and Sunan Ibn-i-Majih, the introductory to tradition No. 17
27. 'Usul-i-Kafi, Vol. 1 Chapter: 'The Attribute of knowledge', tradition No. 9
28. The Commentary of Fakhr-i-Razi, Vol. 9, P. 210
29. Surah Al-'An'am, No. 6, verse 130, and Surah Ar-Rahman, No. 55, verse 33
30. Surah Sad, No. 38, verse 37
31. the commentary of Furqan, and Fi-Zilal
32. Majma'-ul-Bayan, the Commentary
33. The commentaries of Ruh-ul-Bayan and Kanz-ud-Daqa'iq
34. Nahj-ul-Baqalah, saying No. 148
35. Current Surah, verse 22
36. Current Surah, verse 23
37. An Islamic tradition denotes that the seal of a letter shows its nobility. (The Qur'anic commentaries of Majma'-ul-Bayan, Al-Miza, and Qurtubi) Another tradition indicates when the Prophet of Islam (S) decided to write a letter to the king of Iran, he was told that they did not accept any letter without sealing. Then the holy Prophet (S) ordered that a ring should be made and on its bezel had to be carved "La 'ilaha 'illallah, Muhammad Rasul-ul-lah". Then he sealed the letter with it. (Qurtubi, the explanation of the verse)

Section 3: Solomon and the Queen of Sheba

Surah An-Naml - Verses 32-33

قَالَتْ يَآ أَيُّهَا الْمَلَؤُا أَفْتُونِي فِي أَمْرِي مَا كُنتُ قَاطِعَةً أَمْراً حَتَّي تَشْهَدُونِ

قَالُوا نَحْنُ أُولُوا قُوَّةٍ وَأُولُوا بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ وَالاَمْرُ إِلَيْكِ فَانظُرِي مَاذَا تَأْمُرِينَ

32. "She said: 'O chiefs! Pronounce to me respecting my affair; no affair have I decided except in your presence'."
33. "They said: 'We possess force and we possess great might. The affair rests with you; so see what you will command."

The Queen of Sheba, Bilqiys, was a wise intelligent one and possessed a high standard of the ability of recognition. She had also some men and counselors with whom she used to propound the news and events of the locality.

Therefore, after being aware of the content of Solomon's letter and informing it to her people, she, addressing them, said as follows:

"She said: 'O chiefs! Pronounce to me respecting my affair; no affair have I decided except in your presence'."

By this action of hers, she wanted to attract their attentions to her and, thus, strengthen her situation among them. By the meantime, she wanted to estimate and study the amount of their agreement with her decisions.

The Arabic holy word /'aftuni/ is derived from /fatwa/ which originally means 'the proper and correct judgment in complicated affairs'. By this means, the Queen of Sheba both told them the complexity of the issue, and made them attentive to this matter that they should take care of expressing their views, so that they might not go a wrong way.

The Qur'anic word ***/tašhadun/*** is derived from /šuhud/ in the sense of 'presence', a presence which is accompanied with cooperation and consultation.

Then, in the next verse it says:

"They said: 'We possess force and we possess great might. The affair rests with you; so see what

you will command.”

Thus, they not only showed their submission to her and to her commands, but also their willing to relying on power and their participation in the battlefield, since Bilqiys was the commander of the armed forces of her time.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 34

قَالَتْ إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوا أَعِزَّةَ أَهْلِهَا أَذِلَّةً وَكَذَٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ

34. “She said: ‘Verily the kings, when they enter a township, despoil it, and make the noblest of its inhabitants the meanest; and thus they** (**always**) **do’.”

We should not rely only on our power; we must also keep the potentialities of others in mind.

Those who were around Bilqiys said:

“We possess force and we possess great might”.

But Bilqiys warned them not to take the power of Solomon so little.

Then, when the Queen understood their willing for fighting, while she had not inwardly any inclination for this job, in order to quench this thirst and to encounter this matter calculatedly, she said as follows:

“She said: ‘Verily the kings, when they enter a township, despoil it, and make the noblest of its inhabitants the meanest…”

This sentence means that the kings may kill a group of people, captivate another group, and finally they make others homeless, and they spoil their properties as much as they can.

Then for the sake of some further emphasis, she said:

“…and thus they** (**always**) **do’.”

In fact, the Queen of Sheba, who was a king herself, knew the kings well that their program was summarized in too things: ‘despoil’, and ‘making the noblest into meanest’, because the kings used to think only over their own interests, not over the interests of nations and exalting them. These two things always contrast to each other.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 35

وَإِنِّي مُرْسِلَةٌ إِلَيْهِم بِهَدِيَّةٍ فَنَاظِرَةٌ بِمَ يَرْجِعُ الْمُرْسَلُونَ

35. "And verily I am going to send a present unto them, and (***wait to***) ***see with what*** (***answer***) ***the messengers return."***

The tyrants and the kings knew that the Divine prophets did not seek for money, yet they tried to attract them and make them quiet thereby. So, the Queen of Sheba added implying that before anything else, they should test Solomon and those around him to see, indeed, what was their condition.

Was Solomon a king, or a prophet? Was he a destroyer, or a reformer? Did they use to drug nations to meanness, or to honour? So, for this aim they might use of some presents.

That was why she said:

"And verily I am going to send a present unto them, and (***wait to***) ***see with what*** (***answer***) ***the messengers return."***

Kings are often interested in presents very much, and their weakness is found in this very point. They can be made submit by precious presents. The Queen announced if Solomon submit by these presents, it will be known that he is a 'king', and we will stand against him, applying our power, because we are powerful.

But if he shows heedlessness to us and insists on his statements and suggestions, it makes it clear that he is the messenger of Allah and we must treat him wisely.

The Qur'an has not mentioned anything about the kind of presents that the Queen of Sheba sent for Solomon; it has only shown their greatness by applying the word 'present' as an undefined noun, but commentators have mentioned many matters in this regard, some of which are not free from exaggeration and legend.

Some of the commentators have cited that she sent five hundred selected slaves and five hundred particular slave-maids for Solomon, while slave-men were clothed with beautiful dresses and having ear-rings in their ears with bracelets on their bands; and slave-girls were clothed with men clothing and ornamented with beautiful hats.

Then she had written in her letter addressing Solomon that if he was a prophet he would recognize slave-men and slave-girls from each other. She mounted them on worthy horses which were ornamented very heavily, and sent them accompanied with a considerable amount of jewelry.

By the way, she told her representative that if he observed that Solomon's look was wrathful to him as soon as he arrived, he should know that it was the manner of the kings; but if Solomon received him kindly and with good temper, he should know that Solomon was a prophet.

Some Points On Letter Writing

Whatever was said in the abovementioned verses about the content of Solomon's letter to the people of Sheba can be a sample for the style of letter writing, and this is sometimes of the important matters of life. This letter begins with the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful, and the essential subject is said through two calculated sentences.

It is understood from Islamic history and narrations that our Islamic great leaders always emphasized that letters should be written shortly, free from useless matters, and completely calculated.

Through a circular, Amir-ul-Mu'mineen, Ali (as) wrote to his employees and representatives that they should make their pen-points sharp and make the lines of their writings close (to each other), and avoid writing unnecessary matters in their letters, because the Muslim properties could not bear any loss.[1]

Making the pen-points sharp causes that the words be written in a small form, and the lines being close to each other, and omitting unnecessary things from the letter results not only economy in wealth and private properties but also saving the time of both writer and reader, and sometimes abundance causes that the main purpose of the letter be confused among the additional and ceremonial sentences so that both the writer and the reader of it may not obtain their goal.

Principally, someone's letter is a sign for showing his personality and it is like one's messenger.

Ali (as) says:

"Your messenger is the interpreter of your intelligence while your letter is more eloquent in expressing your true self."[2]

Imam Sadiq (as) says:

"One's letter is an evidence for the standard of his wisdom and the situation of his insight, and his messenger is an indication to the level of his understanding and his intellect."[3]

This delicate point should also be noted that some Islamic narrations denote that the reply to a letter must be similar to the reply of a greeting.

Imam Sadiq (as) in a tradition says:

"Answering a letter is obligatory in the same manner that answering a salutation is obligatory."[4]

Surah An-Naml - Verses 36-37

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ سُلَيْمَـانَ قَالَ أَتُمِدُّونَنِ بِمَالٍ فَمَآ ءَاتَانِيَ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِمَّآ ءَاتَاكُمْ بَلْ أَنتُم بِهَدِيَّتِكُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ

ارْجِعْ إِلَيْهِمْ فَلَنَأْتِيَنَّهُم بِجُنُودٍ لا قِبَلَ لَهُم بِهَا وَلَنُخْرِجَنَّهُم مِنْهَآ أَذِلَّةً وَهُمْ صَاغِرُون

36. "And when (the messenger of the Queen) came to Solomon, he (Solomon) said: 'What! Aid you me with wealth? But what Allah has given me is better than what He has given you. Nay, it is you (and not I) who exult in your present'."
37. "Go back to them: so we will certainly come unto them with (such) hosts which they shall not be able to meet, and certainly will we expel them out therefrom in disgrace, while they will feel humbled."

The motive of the Divine prophets is not gaining worldly materials. The friends of Allah do not sell themselves for money. They are kin, alert and act decisively. They see the corruptible plans behind the presents and they avoid them while rebuking their senders.

However, the officials of the Queen of Sheba, carrying the caravan of presents, left Yemen toward Syria, where Solomon lived. They imagined that Solomon would become happy by seeing those abundant presents and might praise them.

But when they confronted Solomon, there appeared a surprising scene in front of them. Not only Solomon did not receive them well, but also he said whether they wanted to help him with their wealth, while wealth was nothing in comparison with knowledge, guidance and prophethood. He added it was worthy for them to become happy with presents, but it was worthless for him.

The verse says:

"And when (the messenger of the Queen) came to Solomon, he (Solomon) said: 'What! Aid you me with wealth? But what Allah has given me is better than what He has given you. Nay, it is you (and not I) who exult in your present'."

Thus, Solomon (as) made the criterion of their values belittle, and manifested that there were other criterions for the values that comparing with which the criterions current among mammonists are very weak and worthless.

Then, in order to show his decisiveness in the issue of right and wrong, Solomon, (sending back the presents with them), told the special official of the Queen of Sheba as follows:

"Go back to them: so we will certainly come unto them with (such) hosts which they shall not be able to meet, and certainly will we expel them out therefrom in disgrace, while they will feel humbled."

The application of the word /'aḏillah/ (in disgrace) is for the first case and the word /saqarun/ (humbled) is for the second case.

This indicates that not only they will be expelled from their land, but they also will be encountered it with humiliation and degradation, in a manner that they will lose all their castles, properties, and glorious ranks, because they, resorting to guiles, do not submit to the true religion.

This threat, of course, for the representatives who observed the Solomon's situation closely and visited his troops, was an earnest and considerable threat.

Regarding to what was said in previous verses by which Solomon wanted them two things: 'abandoning self superiority' and 'submitting to the truth' and that they did not reply to these two great things and they resorted to sending presents as a reason for not accepting them, that was why he threatened them by military force.

If the Queen of Sheba and her entourage had demanded a proof, evidence, miracle and the like, Solomon would have considered them rightful to investigate more. But sending presents showed that they were in a denial position.

We surely know this fact, too, that the most important inconvenient thing that the hoopoe told Solomon (as) about this nation who lived in Yemen was that they had ignored the Mighty Lord Who dominates both the unseen and the seen of the skies and the earth and they were worshipping the sun, a worldly creature.

Solomon became inconvenient with this problem, and we know that idolatry is not something that the divine religion remains silent for it, or bears the idol worshippers as a religious minority. By applying force, he (as) may destroy the idol temples, if necessary, and vanishes idolatry and the polytheistic creed.

The abovementioned explanation makes it also clear that Solomon's threat does not contrast with the principle of

"There is no compulsion in religion",[5]

because idolatry is not a religion, but it is a superstition and deviation.

Some Points

1- It is worthy to note that, from the view point of Divine religions, 'virtue' does not mean that a person deprives himself from the wealth, property and material potentialities of the world, but the reality of 'virtue' is that one does not make himself captive to them but he must be a 'commander' over them.

By rejecting the precious presents that the Queen of Sheba had sent for Solomon, this great Divine prophet showed that he was a 'commander' not a 'captive'.

Imam Sadiq (as) in a tradition says:

*“With Allah, and with His prophets and saints, the world is smaller than that they become happy for something of it or they become sad (for losing it). Thus, it is not suitable for any knowledgeable or intelligent one to be happy for the ephemeral material of the world.”*6

2- In this part of the life story of Solomon, there are some expressive lessons involved in the verses of the Qur’an:

A) The essential goal of sending army is not killing human beings; but its goal is that the enemy should consider in a weak situation for him and that the enemy does not find the power of fighting with them.

“…with (such) hosts which they shall not be able to meet…”

This meaning is similar to the same thing that the Muslims are ordered:

“And prepare against them whatever you can of (military) power and of war-horses, to frighten thereby the enemy of Allah…”7

B) Solomon does not threaten his enemies to death, but he threatens them that they will be expelled from their castles with despise and humiliation; and this is worthy noting.

C) Solomon does not attack his enemies unexpectedly, but he informs them of his attack previously.

D) Solomon does not prospect to others’ wealth, but he says whatever Allah has given him is better. He does not consider the merits of Allah only in material and financial power, but he is honoured with having knowledge, faith and spiritual merits.

Surah An-Naml - Verses 38-39

قَالَ يَآ أَيُّهَا الْمَلَؤُا أَيُّكُمْ يَأْتِينِي بِعَرْشِهَا قَبْلَ أَن يَأْتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ

قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ أَنَاْ ءَاتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَن تَقُومَ مِن مَّقَامِكَ وَإِنِّي عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِيٌّ أَمِينٌ

38. “(Solomon) said: ‘O chiefs!) which of you can bring to me her throne before they come to me in submission?’”
39. “One audacious among the jinn said: ‘I will bring it to you before you rise up from your place; I have strength for it and I am trusty’.”

There is a concept of ‘violence’ and ‘strength’ in the Arabic word /‘ifrit/ here.

After returning the representatives of Bilqiys with their presents, and that the Queen of Sheba became aware that Solomon was not a king, she decided to come to him personally in order to see the

circumstances closely. Solomon was informed of her decision and made himself ready to show his power.

Finally the representatives of the Queen of Sheba took their presents and other things and returned to their own country. They explained what happened in their mission for the Queen and the people around her.

They also stated about the greatness of the miraculous land and sovereignty of Solomon, each of which was an evidence that Solomon was not an ordinary person, or a king, and that he was really a messenger of Allah, because his government was also a godly government.

It was why the Queen of Sheba and a number of the chiefs of her people decided to come to Solomon and personally investigate this important problem and also to know what kind of religion Solomon had.

From any source it was, this news was given to Solomon. Then he decided to show his marvellous might to the Queen of Sheba and her companions before they could reach his land, so that they could become familiar with the reality of his miracle previously, and surrender to his call.

So, Solomon, addressing his entourage, stated as follows:

"(Solomon) said: 'O chiefs!) which of you can bring to me her throne before they come to me in submission?'"

Although some of the commentators have tried to find some reasons for bringing the throne of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon, none of them are consistent with the contents of the verses of the Qur'an, and Solomon's aim for this program is clear.

He wanted to show them his might and an extraordinary action to be fulfilled so that the way of their unconditioned submission and their faith to the power of Allah might be leveled and there would not need to attend in battlefield for fighting and shedding tear.

He wanted to send faith into the depth of the entity of the Queen of Sheba and her entourage so that others would easily accept the invitation to faith and submission, too.

In the next verse, the Qur'an implies that two persons of them announced their readiness for the aim. The suggestion of one of them was surprising and that of the other was more surprising.

The verse says:

"One audacious among the jinn said: 'I will bring it to you before you rise up from your place..."

He said he could do that action very easily and he would not commit any treachery in that valuable deposit.

The verse continues saying:

"...I have strength for it and I am trusty'."

However, the life story of Solomon is full of wonders and supernatural events; and it is not surprising that a jinn be able to do such an important action in a short time in front of Solomon where he (as) was sitting for judging between people, solving the affairs of his country, or for advice and guidance.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 40

قَالَ الَّذِي عِندَهُ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ أَنَاْ ءَاتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَن يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهُ مُسْتَقِرّاً عِندَهُ قَالَ هَذَا مِن فَضْلِ رَبِّي لِيَبْلُوَنِي ءَأَشْكُرُ أَم أَكْفُرُ وَمَن شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ

40. "One with whom was some knowledge (of a part) of the (Divine) Book said: 'I will bring it to you before your eye twinkles'. Then when he saw it settled before him, he said: 'this is of the grace of my Lord that He may try me whether I am grateful or am ungrateful; and whoever is grateful, verily he is grateful for his own soul, and whoever is ungrateful, then my Lord is Self-Sufficient, Bounteous."

It is narrated from Imam Hadi (as) that the one with whom was some knowledge (of a part) of the Divine Book was 'Asif Burkhiya, Solomon's minister and his sister's son.[8]

Imam Baqir (as) said:

'The great name of the Allah contains seventy three letters and 'Asif-ibn-Burkhiya knew only one letter of it, by the power of which he did such a surprising thing."[9]

This verse indicates that the second person who demanded to bring Bilqiys' throne was a righteous man who had a considerable part of knowledge of the Divine Book, as the Qur'an says about him:

"One with whom was some knowledge (of a part) of the (Divine) Book said: 'I will bring it to you before your eye twinkles'..."

And when Solomon agreed with that matter, he brought the throne of the Queen of Sheba there, in front of Solomon, in a very short moment by using his spiritual power.

The verse continues saying about Solomon:

"...Then when he saw it settled before him, he said: 'this is of the grace of my Lord that He may try me whether I am grateful or am ungrateful; and whoever is grateful, verily he is grateful for his own soul..."

Then Solomon added:

"...and whoever is ungrateful, then my Lord is Self-Sufficient, Bounteous."

The Commentators have cited many things that who this person was, where from he obtained this wonderful power, and what the objective of the knowledge of Divine Book was.

But the apparent of the verse shows that this person was one of the specific faithful companions of Solomon whose name has often been introduced in history books as ''Asif Burkhiya' who was Solomon's minister and his sister's son.

The purpose of 'the knowledge of the Book' is having some information from the content of the Divine Book. It was a deep knowledge which made it possible for him to do such an extraordinary action.

Some believe that the purpose of it was 'Preserve Tablet', the same tablet of the knowledge of Allah that this person knew a part of it. It was by the same reason that he could bring the throne of the Queen of Sheba at the presence of Solomon in a very short moment.

Many of the commentators, and others, have thought that this faithful person had known 'the Exalted Name of Allah'; the same great name before which everything becomes humble and gives man an extraordinary power.

This point is necessary to be mentioned that, contrast to what many people think, knowing the Exalted Name of Allah does not mean that one says a proper word and gains those abundant wonderful effects; but the purpose is to be qualified with that qualification of that name.

That is, he must create the quality and meaning of that Divine Name inside his soul so that, from the point of knowledge, piety, faith, and morals, he develops and he himself becomes an example of that Name. This spiritual development, which is a ray from that Exalted Name of Allah, creates such an extraordinary power in man.[10]

Upon the Qur'anic sentence:

"I will bring it to you before your eye twinkles",

commentators have delivered different considerations. But, regarding to other verses of the Qur'an, its reality can be found out.

Surah 'Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 43 says:

"...Their eyes (and eyelids) not blinking..."

which implies that on the Hereafter Day people will be so terrified that their eyes will be in a gazing state and even their eyelids do not blink.

Thus, the purpose of this Qur'anic sentence is that before Solomon had time enough to blink, that person could bring the throne of the Queen of Sheba before him.

Some Points

1) Among the questions arise in relation with these verses is that why Solomon, who was the prophet of Allah and had miracles, himself did not do this extraordinary action and 'Asif Burkhiya achieved it.

Answer: It might be for the sake that 'Asif was Solomon's legate, and Solomon wanted to introduce him to all in that sensitive time. And, there is a detailed tradition narrated from the tenth Imam, Ali-ibn-Muhammad-il-Hadi, cited in the commentary of 'Ayyashi, by which he (as) gave the same answer to Yahy-ibn-'Aktham.[11]

2) In the abovementioned verses, as well as in Surah Al-Qasas, No. 28, verse 26 the most important condition for a good worker is stated two things: A. Ability; B. Trust-worthiness. In other words, Power and trust are two important conditions.

Of course, sometimes there are some occasions that man's mental and ethical fundaments require that he possesses this quality, (as it is said about Moses in Surah Al-Qasas); and sometimes the system of the society and righteous government requires that a jinn be necessarily qualified with these two qualifications.

However, no small or great affair of the society is doable without existing these two conditions, whether they originate from piety or from the legal system of the society.

3) The difference between 'knowledge of a part of the Book' and 'the knowledge of the Book'.

In the verses under discussion the one, who brought the throne of the Queen of Sheba before Solomon in the shortest time, has been introduced as:

"One with whom was some knowledge (of a part) of the (Divine) Book",

while in Surah Ar-Ra'd, No. 13, verse 43 the Qur'an says:

"...Say: 'Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you and he with whom is the knowledge of the Book."

Abusa'id Khidry narrates a tradition from the holy Prophet (S) and says:

"I asked him about the meaning of the 'one with whom was some knowledge (of a part of the (Divine) Book', (which is found in the story of Solomon).

He answered:

'He was the inheritor of my brother Solayman-ibn-Dawud'.

I inquired:

"Whom is it about the one:

'with whom is the knowledge of the Book'?"

He answered:

'He is my brother Ali-ibn-Abi-Talib' (as)"[12]

Paying attention to the difference between the meaning of the holy phrase:

"Some knowledge (of a part) of the (Divine) Book,"

which is used for a constituent knowledge, and the holy phrase:

"The knowledge of the Book',

which refers to a universal knowledge, makes it clear that how far was the distance between the knowledge of 'Asif and the knowledge of Ali (as).

As it was said in the above, some Islamic narrations indicate that the Exalted Name of Allah contains seventy three letters one of which 'Asif-ibn-Burkhiya knew and he could do such an extraordinary action. There are seventy two letters of it with the Imams of Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) and a letter is particular to the Pure Essence of Allah.[13]

4) When the haughty mammonists sit on the throne of power, they forget everything but themselves.

Like Qarun (Croesus) who used to say:

"Said he (Korah): 'I have been given this (wealth) only because of a knowledge that is in me,'..."[14]

They think that all the wealth and possibilities that they have obtained are absolutely from their own side, not from any other source.

But the proper servants of Allah, for every thing they gain, they say:

"This is of the grace of my Lord (to me)."[15]

It is interesting that Solomon said this sentence not only when he saw the throne of the Queen of Sheba in front of Him, but also he added:

"...that He may try me whether I am grateful or am ungrateful..."[16]

Formerly we reiterated in this very Surah that Solomon said all his merits and bounties are from Allah, and he humbly asks Him to grant him the chance of being gratitude for them and to give him success to be able to get His pleasure because of them.

Yes, this fact is the criterion of recognizing the sincere monotheists from haughty mammonists, and this is the manner of the noble persons with capacity and personality comparing those haughty ones who have no capacity.

It has become common that some apparently Muslims write only the Solomon's sentence:

"This is of the grace of my Lord"

at the top of the arrival door of their castles without having any belief in it and that it has any trace in their deeds. But it is important that this meaning could be seen not only at the top of their arrival door, but also in all aspects of their lives and in their hearts so that their behaviour shows that they consider them all from the grace of Allah and try to thank Him by their deeds.

The Virtues of Amir-ul-Mu'mineen and Ahl-ul-Bayt (as)

The verse under discussion remarks:

"One with whom was some knowledge (of a part) of the (Divine) Book said: 'I will bring it to you before your eye twinkles.'…",

but at the end of Surah Ar-Ra'd, No. 13, Allah says to His Messenger (S):

"And those who disbelieve say: 'You are not a messenger'. Say: Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you and he with whom is the knowledge of the Book."[17]

Some Islamic traditions indicate that the purpose of 'the one with whom is the (whole) knowledge of the Book' is Ali-ibn-Abitalib (as). When a person who knows a part of the Book brings the throne of Bilqiys to Solomon in a twinkling of eye, then how much power has, in his lifetime, the one who knows the knowledge of the whole Book?

Imam Sadiq (as) says:

"The knowledge of the one with whom was the knowledge of a part of the Book comparing Ali's knowledge is like the amount of water which is on the wing of a fly with respect to a sea."[18]

Another tradition indicates that Imam Sadiq (as), pointing to his chest, said:

"And with us, by Allah, is the knowledge of the Book utterly."[19]

Some Islamic traditions indicate that, disregard to time and place, Imams, the infallible, (as) can attend in

some places. For example, Imam Jawad (as) at the moment of his father's martyrdom, went from Medina to Tus.

Imam Kazim (as) came out of his prison and presented in Medina. At the time of his captivity, Imam Sajjad (as) went to Karbala and buried his father's body, Imam Hussayn (as). Before his martyrdom, Imam Hussayn (as) took a handful of the soil of Karbala and gave it to Um-us-Salamah in Medina.

Therefore, folding of the earth miraculously and rapidly by Imams has happened and has some particular records.[20]

Surah An-Naml - Verse 41

قَالَ نَكِّرُوا لَهَا عَرْشَهَا نَنظُرْ أَتَهْتَدِي أَمْ تَكُونُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ لاَ يَهْتَدُونَ

41. "(Solomon) said: 'Disguise her throne for her, we will see whether she follows the right way or she is one of those who do not go aright'."

This verse points to another surprising scene of instructive event of Solomon (as) and the Queen of Sheba.

In order to test the level of wisdom, perspicacity and intelligence of the Queen of Sheba, and to prepare a ground for her faith to Allah, too, Solomon ordered that her throne, which had been brought there, should be altered in an unknown state for her in order that they see whether she could recognize it, or not.

The verse says:

"(Solomon) said: 'Disguise her throne for her, we will see whether she follows the right way or she is one of those who do not go aright'."

Though the coming of the Queen's throne from the country of Sheba to Syria was enough for her not to recognize it, yet Solomon ordered that some changes should be done on it. These changes may have been removing some signs or jewels of the throne, or changing some colours of it, or the like.

But there arises a question that what was the goal of Solomon in testing the wisdom, perspicacity, and intelligence of the Queen of Sheba?

The test might be done for the sake that he could know with which logic he ought to confront her, and what kind of reason should he bring for her to prove the ideological basic principles.

Or he had the thought of suggesting marriage to her in mind and he wanted to know whether she had really the competency of being his wife, or not. Or, indeed, Solomon (as) wanted to give her a

responsibility after she believed in Truth. He must know how much she was capable to undertake the responsibilities.

For the Qur'anic sentence ***/'atahtadi/*** (***Does she follows the right way***), there have also been mentioned two commentaries:

Some have said that the purpose was the recognition of her own throne, while some others have said that the objective was her being guided to the path of Allah by seeing this miracle. But the apparent of the verse leads to the first meaning, although the first meaning itself had been a premise for the second meaning.

Surah An-Naml - Verses 42-43

فَلَمَّا جَآءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَكَذَا عَرْشُكِ قَالَتْ كَأَنَّهُ هُوَ وَأُوتِينَا الْعِلْمَ مِن قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ

وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَت تَّعْبُدُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِن قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ

42. "So when she came, she was asked: 'Is your throne like this?' She said: 'It is as it were the same. And we were given the knowledge before it, and we were submitting'."
43. "And he barred her from the worship of others besides Allah, verily she was of the disbelieving people."

However, when the Queen of Sheba arrived, someone pointed to the throne and asked her whether her throne was like that.

The verse says:

"So when she came, she was asked: 'Is your throne like this?'..."

The apparent of the verse shows that the speaker of this statement was not Solomon himself, else it was not appropriate for the sentence to be said in a passive voice form, because the name of Solomon has been mentioned before and after it, and his words are expressed in an active form.

Moreover, it was not fit for the grandeur of Solomon that he speaks like that at the beginning of the arrival of Bilqiys.

However, the Queen of Sheba gave the most wisely and calculated answers, when she said:

"...'It is as it were the same..."

If she said it was like it, she would be wrong; and if she said it was exactly the same, she would have

said something contrast to precaution, because, with that length of distance, it was impossible that her throne could be brought to the country of Solomon in an ordinary way, save that there had been done a miracle.

Moreover, it is recorded in history books that she had been protecting her precious throne in a safe place in her particular castle in a room with some firm and strong doors, which was being guarded by some watchful men. Yet, with all the changes which that throne had received, the Queen of Sheba could recognize it.

Then, immediately she added:

"...And we were given the knowledge before it, and we were submitting'."

This means that she implied if the purpose of Solomon by these deeds was that they comprehended his miracle, they had formerly been aware of his legitimacy by other signs, and even before observing this surprising supernatural event they had believed, and these things were not needed.

Thus, Solomon stopped her from worshipping what was besides Allah, although she was formerly one of the disbelievers.

The verse says:

"And he barred her from the worship of others besides Allah, verily she was of the disbelieving people."

Yes, by seeing these clear signs, she said farewell to her last dark position and entered into a new stage of life which was full of light of faith and certainty.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 44

قِيلَ لَهَا ادْخُلِي الصَّرْحَ فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً وَكَشَفَتْ عَن سَاقَيْهَا قَالَ إِنَّهُ صَرْحٌ مُّمَرَّدٌ مِن قَوَارِيرَ قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

44. "It was said to her: 'Enter the palace,' but when she saw it she deemed it to be a great expanse of water and bared her legs. (Solomon) said: 'Verily this is but a palace smoothed of crystal'. She said: 'My Lord! Verily I have been unjust to myself, and I surrender with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds'."

We must not encounter the wealthy ones in a way that they think 'Faith' means 'poverty'. The material potentialities should be at the service of propagation of religion. Industry and financial potentialities can be used in the path of Solomon-like goals for the guidance and leading others.

However, in this holy verse, another scene of this event is referred to. The explanation is about the act of entering the Queen of Sheba into the particular castle of Solomon.

Solomon had ordered that the yard of one of the castles should be built of crystal, and beneath it there would be flowing water. When the Queen of Sheba arrived there, she was told to enter the yard of the castle.21

When the Queen looked at it, she imagined it was a stream. So she bared her legs in order to pass it through, (while she had got surprised about the existence of a stream there).22

The verse says:

"It was said to her: 'Enter the palace,' but when she saw it she deemed it to be a great expanse of water and bared her legs. (***Solomon***) ***said: 'Verily this is but a palace smoothed of crystal'..."***

There arises here a question that why Solomon, who was a Divine prophet, had such an extraordinary splendid palace. It is true that he was a ruler, but was it not possible that he also had a simple means of life like other prophets?

It did not matter to Solomon that for surrendering the Queen of Sheba, who considered all her power and greatness in her beautiful throne and her glorious castle and the like, he would show her that all her splendours were very little in his view, so that this action could become a turning point in her life for reviewing the standard of values and criterion of personality.

It does not matter that instead of a military expedition, which results to destruction and shedding tear, Solomon makes the mind and thought of the Queen of Sheba so overpowered that she does not think of it at all; in particular that she was a woman and gave prominence to such ceremonial issues.

Many commentators have specially cited that, before reaching the Queen of Sheba to Syria, Solomon ordered that such a castle should be built; and his aim was exhibition of power for surrendering her. That action indicated that a great power, from the point of apparent military forces, was in the hand of Solomon that made him able to accomplish such things.

In other words, this expenditure for creating security and peace in a vast province, and accepting the true religion, and also preventing the large expenditure of war, was not a significant matter.

So, when the Queen of Sheba observed that scene, she expressed, as the verse says:

"...She said: 'My Lord! Verily I have been unjust to myself, and I surrender with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds'."

She confessed that formerly she used to fall prostrate before the sun, worshipped idol, applied ornaments, and considered herself the most superior one in the world. But now, she understands that

how little and insignificant her power is.

And basically, these ornaments and dazzling glares do not satiate one’s soul. She repents of her past deeds and says that she has come to the Lord of the worlds accompanied with her leader, Solomon.

It is interesting that here she uses the word /ma‘a/ (with Solomon) in order to clarify that, in paving the path of Allah, they are equal and brethren, not like the manner and custom of tyrants that some of them have power over some others and a group are involved as captives in the grips of another group.

Here there is not any one victorious and overcome, and, after accepting the Truth, all are in the same row.

It is true that the Queen of Sheba had announced her faith before that, too, and she said:

“...And we were given the knowledge before it, and we were submitting.”

But here the submission of the Queen reaches its climax, and, therefore, she announces her faith to the Truth with emphasis.

She had seen a number of signs of the legitimacy of Solomon’s invitation before, such as: coming of the hoopoe in that special condition; the lack of acceptance of those valuable presents which had been sent from the side of the Queen; bringing her throne from a long distance in a short moment; and, finally, observing the extraordinary power and greatness of Solomon while he had a particular manner which had no similarity with the behaviour of kings.

Some moods of Solomon, which are expressed in previous thirty verses and point to many different issues, were discussed.

Now some other parts of them are referred to in the following:

1) This story begins with the merit and vast knowledge that Allah has bestowed on Solomon; and it ends with monotheism and submitting to the command of Allah, a monotheism the base of which is also knowledge.

2) This story shows that sometimes the absence and an exceptional flight of a bird over a region may change the history of a nation and drag them from idolatry to Faith, and from corruption to righteousness. This is an example of the power of Allah, and the example of the legitimate government.

3) This story shows that the light of monotheism may illuminate all hearts, and even an apparently mute bird can inform of the depth of the secrets of monotheism.

4) In order to attract the attention of a person to his true value, and leading him unto Allah, at first his haughtiness must be broken in order that the dark curtains of vanity be removed from his eyes and he sees the fact. By achieving two things, Solomon broke the pride of the Queen of Sheba: bringing her

throne, and causing her to make mistake when she confronted a part of the castle.

5) The ultimate goal in prophets' government is not conquest, but the aim is the same thing that was mentioned in the abovementioned verse, that the arrogant confess their sin and surrender to the Lord of the worlds. So, by mentioning this very point, the Qur'an puts an end to the above story.

6) The soul of Faith is submission. That was why not only Solomon emphasized on it in his letter, but also the Queen of Sheba did it at the end of the event.

7) Sometimes someone, who has the greatest possible power in his authority, may become in need of a small weak creature, like a bird. He takes help not only from its knowledge but also from its deed; and sometimes an ant, with that weakness and disability that it has, belittles him.

8) The revelation of these verses in Mecca, where Muslims were under serious pressure from the side of their enemies, and all the doors were shut to them, had a special concept. Its aim was to strengthen their spirits, sooth them, and make them hopeful of the grace of Allah and to the future victories.

By the way, at last the Queen of Sheba believed and gave the suggestion of marriage to Solomon, and said:

"...I surrender with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds'."

1. Bihar, Vol. 76, P. 49
2. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, saying No. 301
3. Bihar-ul-Anwar, Vol. 76, P.50
4. Wasa'il, Vol. 8, P. 437
5. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 256
6. The Commentary of Ruh-ul-Bayan, following the verse.
7. Surah Al-'Anfal, No. 8, verse 60
8. The commentary of Nur-Uth-Thaqalayn
9. Kafi, Vol. 1, P. 230
10. The discussion upon 'the Exalted Name of Allah' has been mentioned when commenting Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 180
11. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 91; Tafsir-us-Safi, Vol. 4, P. 67; and Burhan, Vol. 3, P. 20
12. Some of the commentators of Sunnites and the Sunnite scholars have narrated this tradition in this very form or similar to it. For more details you may refer to 'Ihghagh-ul-Haqq, Vol. 3, PP. 380-381
13. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 91; Tafsir-us-Safi, Vol. 4, P.67; and Burhan, Vol. 3, P. 202
14. Surah Al-Qasas, No. 28, verse 78
15. The verse under discussion
16. Ibid
17. Surah Ar-Ra'd, No. 13, verse 43
18. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, the Commentary
19. Ibid
20. Tafsir-i-Atyab-ul-Bayan
21. The Arabic word /sarh/ here means 'the yard of the castle'.
22. The Arabic word /lujjah/ means: 'depth of the sea', and abundant water.

Section 4: Saleh and Lot

Surah An-Naml - Verses 45-46

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَي ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحاً أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ فَإِذَا هُمْ فَرِيقَانِ يَخْتَصِمُونَ

قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ لِمَ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِالسَّيِّـئَةِ قَبْلَ الْحَسَنَةِ لَوْلاَ تَسْتَغْفِرُونَ اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

45. "And indeed We sent unto (the tribe of) Thamud their brother Saleh, saying: 'Worship you Allah!' but behold, they became two parties quarrelling with each other."
46. "He said: 'O my people! Why will you hasten on the evil before the good? Why do you not ask forgiveness of Allah so that you may be dealt with mercifully?"

Next to a part of life stories of Moses, David, and Solomon (as) mentioned in the previous verses, the fourth prophet, a part of whose life story is referred to in this Surah, is Hadrat Saleh, the prophet of Thamud people.

At first, it says:

"And indeed We sent unto (the tribe of) Thamud their brother Saleh, saying: 'Worship you Allah!'..."

As it was also said before, the application of the concept of 'their brother', which has been used in the story life of several prophets, is a hint to their ultimate love and affection unto their peoples. In addition to this, in some instances, it points to their relationship with those people, too.

However, the entire messengership and invitation of this prophet is summarized in the holy phrase:

"Worship you Allah!"

Yes, the servitude of Allah is the essence of all teachings of the messengers of Allah.

Then, the verse continues saying:

"...but behold, they became two parties quarrelling with each other."

Those two groups, who quarrelled with each other, were the believers, from one side, and the obstinate disbelievers, from the other side.

Imam Baqir (as) said:

“A group attested the invitation of Hadrat Salih but another group rejected it.”[1]

These two groups are referred to in Surah Al–’A‘raf, No. 7, verse 75 as:

‘The arrogant’

and

‘those who were considered weak’.

It says:

“The chiefs of the arrogant among his people said to those who were considered weak – those of them who believed – ‘Do you know that Saleh is sent by his Lord?’ they said surely we believe in what he has been sent with’.”
“Those who were arrogant said: ‘We, indeed, disbelieve in that which you believe’.”[2]

Of course, this conflict of two groups of believers and disbelievers existed among the peoples of many prophets, although some of them were deprived of even these adherents and nearly the totality of their people were rejecters of the truth.

Finally, in order to awaken them, Hadrat Saleh (as) began warning them, and made them aware of the painful chastisements of Allah. But not only they did not take counsel, but also took that very matter as a reason for their obstinacy, and persistently wanted him that they should be involved with the Divine punishment if he was truthful.[3]

But Saleh replied them as follows:

“He said: ‘O my people! Why will you hasten on the evil before the good?...”

Why do you concentrate your thought on meeting the Divine punishment? If the Divine chastisement meets you, it will put an end to your life and there will not remain any time for you to believe. Let yourselves try the legitimacy of my statement by the grace and blessings of Allah which will embrace you as the result of Faith.

The verse continues saying:

“...Why do you not ask forgiveness of Allah so that you may be dealt with mercifully?”

Why do you seek for evils and the descent of punishment? What is this obstinacy and arrogance for?

Those who rejected the call of prophets and asked for the promised punishment were not limited to the people of Saleh, this matter is repeatedly seen in the Qur’an concerning other peoples, too, including the

people of Nuh.4

In relation to the Prophet of Islam (S) and some fanatic and obstinate polytheists, the Qur'an says:

"And (remember) when they said: 'O Allah! If this (Qur'an) is the truth from You, then rain down upon us stones from the sky, or bring us a painful punishment'."5

This is, indeed, surprising that some persons want to try the truthfulness of the call of the prophet by the way of Divine destructive punishment, not by the way of asking for Divine mercy; while certainly they do verify the probable legitimacy of those prophets in their hearts, though they deny it by tongue.

This behaviour is like a person who claims he is a physician and says this medicine is curative and that one is fatal, and then, in order to test him, we use the fatal medicine, not the curative one.

This is the ultimate ignorance, folly and fanaticism, while ignorance has many fruits of this kind.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 47

قَالُوا اطَّيَّرْنَا بِكَ وَبِمَن مَّعَكَ قَالَ طَآئِرُكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ بَلْ أَنتُمْ قَوْمٌ تُفْتَنُونَ

47. "They said: 'Ill omen do we augur from you and those with you'. He said: 'Your ill omen is with Allah. Nay! You are a people who are being tried'."

The Arabic word /tatayyur/ is derived from /tayr/ which means 'a bird'. Some of Arabs used to leave a bird at the time when they wanted to travel.

If it went to the right direction they would start their traveling, and if it flew to the left (they augured ill and) they would suspend their traveling.6 In Islam auguring ill has been considered disbelief. To augur ill leads to leaving the main reasons and going toward superstitions.

There are many occurrences in the Qur'an which indicate that the Divine prophets had been augured ill. The people of Pharaoh thought that their afflictions had come because of Moses (as).

The Qur'an says:

"...and if any evil afflicted them, they took it bad omens due to Moses..."7

Jesus (as) was told:

"...For us, we augur an evil omen from you..."8

In the above mentioned verse, the disbelievers told Saleh:

"...'Ill omen do we augur from you and those with you'..."

However, this arrogant nation, instead of listening to the sympathetic advice of their great prophet and applying it, they opposed him with some vain words and baseless conclusions, among them is their following statement:

"They said: 'Ill omen do we augur from you and those with you'..."

It seems that there was drought, and deficiency of crop and foodstuff for the people of Moses in that year. They said that all those afflictions and difficulties were because of unpleasant advent of Moses and his followers who brought them and their society misery and omen.

By resorting to the weapon of ill omen, which is often the weapon of arrogant and superstitious persons, they wanted to overcome the strong logic of Moses (as). But in answer to them, he said that their evil fortune was with Allah, and it was their own deeds that resulted such miseries and afflictions, as punishments. In fact, this was a great Divine trial for them.

The verse continues saying:

"...He said: 'Your ill omen is with Allah. Nay! You are a people who are being tried'."

These are some Divine trials. They are some warnings and awakening subjects for those who have some suitability and competency to awake from the sleep of negligence and, by going to the path of Allah, improve themselves.

There are also some people in some societies who do not believe in Allah, although they have earned some considerable good grades in knowledge and science but, in the meantime, they have some superstitions and similar vain beliefs in them and they still have a warm market for fortune-telling and soothsaying among them, so that the illusive subject of luck and horoscopy has many customers.

But the Qur'an through a short sentence says:

"Your ill omen is with Allah."

This means your luck, your victory, your defeat, and your success and failure all are with Allah, Who is Wise, and His favours are divided among men according to their competencies, those very competencies which are the reflection of their Faith, action, speech and behaviour.

Thus, the Qur'an drives out the followers of Islam from the valley of superstition to reality and from devious way toward straight Path.

Some Traditions Upon Bad Omen

1. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“The atonement of ill omen is reliance in Allah.”[9]

2. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“Ill omen is infidelity and it is not from us, but reliance in Allah abolishes it.”[10]

3. There has been narrated that, in supplication, the Prophet (S) used to say:

“O Allah! There is no omen but Your omen, no goodness but Your goodness, and no god but You (Allah). O Allah! No one gives rewards but You, and no one wipes the faults but You, and there is no power except in Allah, the Exalted, the Great.”[11]

Surah An-Naml - Verse 48

وَكَانَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ تِسْعَةُ رَهْطٍ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الاَرْضِ وَلاَ يُصْلِحُونَ

48. “And there were in the city nine (groups of) persons who made mischief in the land and would not reform.”

The Arabic word /raht/ is used for ‘a group of people among whom there is a warm relation’.

This holy verse refers to another part of the life story of Saleh (as) which completes the previous part and concludes the story. It concerns the plot of nine groups of pagans and hypocrites who wanted to kill Saleh, but their evil plot failed.

The Qur’an says:

“And there were in the city nine (groups of) persons who made mischief in the land and would not reform.”

Regarding to the fact that the Arabic word /raht/ in lexicon means a group of persons who are less than ten or less than forty members, makes it clear that these small groups, each of which had a separate line, were similar to each other in one thing and it was making mischief in the earth, disturbing the social system and the creedal and ethical principles.

The Qur’anic phrase ***/layuslihuna/*** (***would not reform***) is an emphasis on this matter, because it sometimes happens that someone makes a mischief and later he regrets and tries to amend himself, but the real mischief mongers are not like that. They go on their corruption constantly and never try to rectify their wrong.

Paying attention to the Arabic conjugation of the verb /yufsidun/ (make mischief), which is in future and simple present tense form and indicates to the duration of the action, it shows that this action was their

permanent deed and they used to commit it.

Each of these nine groups had a chief, and probably every one of them was from a separate tribe.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 49

قَالُوا تَقَاسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ لَنُبَيِّتَنَّهُ وَأَهْلَهُ ثُمَّ لَنَقُولَنَّ لِوَلِيِّهِ مَا شَهِدْنَا مَهْلِكَ أَهْلِهِ وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ

49. "They said: 'Swear a mutual oath by Allah that surely we will make a sudden attack on him and his family by night, then we will tell his heir, we were not present at the slaughter of his household, and verily we are truthful'."

The content of this holy verse is similar to the state of the pagans of Mecca who united by an oath and decided to surprise and kill the Prophet of Islam (S) in his bed while he was asleep, but the holy Prophet (S) asked Hadrat Ali (as) to sleep in his bed and thus the enemy's plot was nullified.

Certainly by the appearance of Saleh and his pure religion in the society, those groups were driven to extremities, and it was in that condition that, as the verse says:

"They said: 'Swear a mutual oath by Allah that surely we will make a sudden attack on him and his family by night, then we will tell his heir, we were not present at the slaughter of his household, and verily we are truthful'."

The Arabic word /taqasamu/ (swear a mutual oath), in an imperative verb form, means: 'everybody must participate in making an oath and promise to achieve this great plot', a promise in which there is no change or return.

It is interesting that they made an oath by Allah. It indicates that, besides worshipping idols, they believed in Allah, the Creator of the skies and the earth, too. Therefore, they used to make an oath to Him in relation to important matters.

It also shows that they were so proud that they did this great crime of theirs by mentioning their names; as if they wanted to worship, or to do a godly service. This is the custom of haughty misguided disbelievers.

The Qur'anic word ***/lanubayyitannahu/*** (***surely we will make a sudden attack on him***) is derived from /tabyit/ which means 'to surprise and to attack suddenly by night'. The application of this meaning here shows that, in the meanwhile, they were afraid of the adherents of Saleh and his tribe.

Therefore, in order that they could reach their own goal and, in the meantime, they might not confront the anger of his followers, they designed the plot of a sudden attack at night and colluded that if Saleh's

followers came to them, all of them with together take an oath that they had no role in that event absolutely, and even they were not present there nor had they witnessed it.

Surah An-Naml – Verses 50-51

وَمَكَرُوا مَكْراً وَمَكَرْنَا مَكْراً وَهُمْ لاَ يَشْعُرُونَ

فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ مَكْرِهِمْ أَنَّا دَمَّرْنَاهُمْ وَقَوْمَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

50. "And they devised a device, and We devised a device (***too***)***, but they were not aware;"***
51. "And behold, how was the end of their device! For We destroyed them and their people all together."

The means of annihilation of the people of Thamud has been referred to in several occurrences of the Qur'an with different explanations:

1) By earthquake:

"...Then the earthquake seized them..."12

2) By thunderbolt:

"...So the Thunderbolt seized them..."13

3) By Mighty Blast:

"And the (***mighty***) ***Blast overtook those who were unjust..."***14

It does not matter, of course, that these three punishments might have occurred simultaneously.

One of the aspects of the device of Allah is giving respite and bounty to the sinners, so that they be busy with them, and when their time is over they are suddenly involved in the chastisement of Allah.

History announces that there was a mountain in a side of the city and it had a slit where the temple of Saleh was. Sometimes Saleh (as) went there at night in order to worship and prattle with Allah as two lovers.

They decided to lie in ambush there and when Saleh came over there they would kill him, and then, after his martyrdom, they would attack his home by the same night and kill his household, too, and return to their houses; and when they were questioned about it, they would say they knew nothing.

But Allah nullified their plots surprisingly and their plans remained invalid.

When they were lying in ambush in a corner of the mountain, some pieces of the mountain fall and a huge rock from upward of it came down over them and destroyed them in a short moment.

The verse says:

“And they devised a device, and We devised a device (too), but they were not aware;”

Then, the next verse implies that not only those people, but also their adherents were destroyed.

It says:

“And behold, how was the end of their device! For We destroyed them and their people all together.”

As it has been mentioned formerly, the Qur’anic term ***/makr/***, in the Arabic literature, means any ‘application of a remedy’, and it does not pertain exclusively to satanic and harmful plans that is used in the Persian language today. Thus, it is used in both harmful plans and good devices.

Raqib in Mufradat says:

*“**/makr/** (**device**) is that which hinders one to reach his goal.”*

Therefore, when this word is used about Allah, it means: ‘nullification of harmful plots’; and when it is used about mischief mongers, it means: ‘impedimental acts against reproving programs’.

Surah An-Naml - Verses 52-53

فَتِلْكَ بُيُوتُهُمْ خَاوِيَةً بِمَا ظَلَمُوا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ

وَأَنجَيْنَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ

52. “So those are their houses in empty ruins for they were unjust. Verily there is in this a sign for a people who have knowledge.”
53. “And We saved those who believed and used to keep from evil.”

The Arabic word /xawiyah/ means ‘corruption, annihilation, and destruction’, and it is also used in the sense of ‘empty of dwellers’.

Chastisement is not limited to that of Hereafter, sometimes oppressors are punished in this world. This situation is also the same for the effects of faith and piety which is not particular to the Hereafter. The pious people observe the result of their deeds in this world, too.

However, regarding to their annihilation and final fate, the holy Qur'an says:

"So those are their houses in empty ruins for they were unjust..."

Their houses are utterly ruin and there is no people to have activities therein, and there have remained no sign of their glories, bounties and sinful gatherings.

Yes, the fire of cruelty and injustice caused them and all their belongings to be burnt and destroyed. This is a clear sign for the end of the act of those who are unjust.

The verse continues saying:

"...Verily there is in this a sign for a people who have knowledge."

But in this event those who were not guilty were not burnt in the fire of the guilty ones and were not involved in the evil fate of wrongdoers.

The verse says:

"And We saved those who believed and used to keep from evil."

Surah An-Naml - Verses 54-55

وَلُوطاً إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ وَأَنتُمْ تبْصِرُونَ

أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِن دُونِ النِّسَآءِ بَلْ أَنتُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ

54. "And (We sent) Lot, when he said to his people: 'Do you commit indecency while you see (its iniquity)?'"
55. "What! Do you approach men lustfully instead of women? No, you are a people that are ignorant."

The people of Lot used to commit sodomy in their public meetings and before the eyes of each other. Surah Al-'Ankabut, No. 29, verse 29 says:

"...and you commit dishonour in your assemblies?..."

In the above verse, the Qur'an also says:

"...while you see (its iniquity)?"

which means 'you commit indecency before the eyes of each other, or you commit sin consciously and

with insight.

Sodomy is one of the great and hideous sins, because the later verses of the Surah indicate that it consequently brings the chastisement of Allah.

Some other verses of the Qur'an refer to the fact that wife is necessary for calmness, educating and raising up generation, and cooperation in living; but, here, the Qur'an points only to the phenomenon of lust, because the people of Lot had not any aim of their shameful act but lust.

Next to mentioning parts of the life stories of Moses, David, Solomon, and Saleh and their peoples, the fifth prophet whom has been referred to in this Surah, is Lot, the great prophet of Allah.

This subject has repeatedly been referred to in the former Suras of the Qur'an, such as Al-Hijr, Hud, Ash-Shu'ara, and Al-'A'raf, where some matters have been mentioned in this ground.

This repetition, and the like of it, is for the fact that the Qur'an is not a book of history in which an event may be wholly explained for one time and it usually does not refer to that event again.

But Qur'an is a book of education for training good men, and we know that in educational themes sometimes the conditions require that an incident should be repeated again and again, in order that it could be reminded and be dealt with from different dimensions.

However, the story of the people of Lot, who are known in the world for their sexual deviation, Sodomy, and for other hideous deeds, as well as their fate at the end of their life, can be an example for those who are drowned in the cesspool of lusts; and the spread of this pollution among societies requires that this instructive event to be mentioned repeatedly.

Here the Qur'an says:

"And (We sent) Lot, when he said to his people: 'Do you commit indecency while you see (its iniquity)?'"

The Arabic word /fahišah/, as we have said aforetime, means some deeds that the indecency and ugliness of which is manifest, but here the purpose of it is the shameful act of Sodomy.

The Qur'anic phrase ***/'antum tubsirun/*** (***while you see***) refers to this fact that you see the ugliness and the evil results of this hideous action with your eyes, and you observe that your society has wholly become polluted, so that even your own children are not secured. Why do you see, but yet you do not awake?

Then, in the next verse, it says:

"What! Do you approach men lustfully instead of women?..."

In fact, at first the Qur'an points to this action as an indecent action, /fahišah/, then it explains it more clearly so that there remains no ambiguity for anybody. This is one of the styles of decorum in order to state an important thing.

Then for making clear that the motive of this action is ignorance, it says:

"...No, you are a people that are ignorant."

This ignorance is the ignorance to Allah, the ignorance to the purpose of creation and laws of creation, and the ignorance to the evil effects of this important sin. If a person, contemplates deeply, he will understand that how much ignorantly this evil action is.

The reason why this sentence is stated in interrogative form is for the sake that they hear its answer from the inside of their own conscience so that it may be more effective.

The End of Part 19

Surah An-Naml - Verse 56

فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلاَّ أَن قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوا ءَالَ لُوطٍ مِن قَرْيَتِكُمْ إِنَّهُمْ أُنَاسٌ يَتَطَهَّرُونَ

56. "But the answer of his people was naught except that they said: 'Drive out the people of Lot from your city; verily they are people (who seek to be) pure."

Since the wrong doers have not any acceptable logic before the Divine prophets, they use force against them.

The former discussions with the strong logic of Lot, the Divine prophet, in front of those polluted people, explained that how he dissuaded them from the hideous act of Sodomy by his reasonable and eloquent statement, and he showed them that this act is the consequence of ignorance and being unaware of the law of creation and all human values.

Now, we see the answer of this polluted nation to the logical statement of Lot (as).

The holy Qur'an says:

"But the answer of his people was naught except that they said: 'Drive out the people of Lot from your city; verily they are people (who seek to be) pure."

This answer is an implication to the low level of their thought and the extraordinary fall of their ethical affairs.

Yes, in the environment of the polluted ones, chastity is a crime and a defect. The chaste and modest

ones, like Yusuf, are put in prison, and the household of the divine prophet, because of their chastity and avoidance from pollution, are banished, while the persons like Zulaykha, are free and possess ranks.

Lot's household must be banished, but the people of Lot can live in peace in their city freely.

This is the clear example of the word of Qur'an where it says about the wrong doers that their hearts were sealed because of their deeds and their eyes were veiled and their ears had heaviness.[15]

It is also probable that because of their being sunk in corruption and being accustomed to pollution, concerning Lot's household, they said in mockery:

"…They are people** (**who seek to be**) **pure…".

These people implied that Lot's household imagined that their piety was chastity and the act of the people of Lot was impious. What a wonderful and ridiculous thing!

And it is not surprising that, as the result of getting accustomed to a shameful action, the sense of recognition of a person changes. The famous story of a tanner, who was constantly with the purified skins and his sense of smell had got accustomed to that bad smell, is well known.

When he was passing the market of perfume-sellers, he became unconscious, and the concerning doctor ordered that he should be brought into the market of tanners to 'recover his sense'. We have heard this story and it is an interesting sensible example for this logical matter.

Surah An-Naml - Verses 57-58

فَأنجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلاَّ امْرَأَتَهُ قَدَّرْنَاهَا مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ

وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَّطَراً فَسَآءَ مَطَرُ الْمُنذَرِينَ

57. "So We saved him and his household, except his wife, We had decreed her to be of those that tarried."
58. "And We rained down on them a shower** (**of brimstone**)**, and evil was the shower of those who had been warned.

The Divine leaders are under the protection and support of Allah:

"So We saved him…"

The fruit of people's piety and virtue in this world is their being saved from the wrath of Allah.

The Arabic word /qabirin/, which means: ‘those that tarried and were annihilated’, has been used seven times in the Qur’an and all of them are about Lot’s wife.

It has been cited in narrations that Lot taught those people for about thirty years but none believed in him except his household, (and among them even his wife had the creed of pagans).[16]

It is evident that such a group, who might not be improved, could not have a room for living in this world and they should be annihilated.

Therefore, this verse says:

“So We saved him and his household, except his wife, We had decreed her to be of those that tarried.”

Then, when Lot and his family came out of the city at the appointed time, (in midnight of the night when the city was full of corruption and shame), a terrible earthquake turned their land completely upside down, and, in the morning, a shower of brimstone came over there.

The verse says:

“And We rained down on them a shower (of brimstone), and evil was the shower of those who had been warned.”

We had a detailed discussion about the people of Lot and their fate, as well as the evil effects of Sodomy, when explaining holy Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 77-83, which is not necessary to be repeated here again.

There is only one point, of course, that seems necessary to be mentioned here, as follows:

As a factor for duration of man’s seed and the calmness of his soul, the law of creation has set the sexual attraction between two opposite sexes, and its change toward Sodomy disturbs both the spiritual calmness and the social peace. And since these social laws have a trace in man’s nature, this change causes a kind of disorder in the system of the entity of man.

Lot, the great prophet of Allah, attracted the attention of that deviated nation to this natural trace and said to them:

“Do you commit indecency while you see (its iniquity)?”

This ignorance and unawareness of the law of life was in the sense of foolishness that drugged them towards this devious way.

It is not marvellous that other laws of creation may change due to this nation, too, and instead of a wholesome rain water, a shower of brimstone rains down over them, and their peaceful land turns over

by an earthquake, and, consequently, not only they are destroyed but also no trace remains from them.

1. Tafsir-i-Nur-uth-Thaqalayn
2. Al-'A'raf, verses 75-76
3. This meaning is explicitly expressed in Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 77
4. Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 70
5. Sur Al-'Anfal, No. 8, verse 32
6. Tafsir-ul-Kashshaf
7. Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 131
8. Surah Yasin, No. 36, verse 18
9. Nahaj by Ibn-Abil-Hadid, Vol. 20, P. 283
10. Sunan-i-Ibn-Majid, Vol. 2, P. 1170; and Sunan-i-'Abi Dawud, Vol. 2, P. 344
11. Safinah, Vol. 2, P. 102
12. Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 78
13. Surah Ath-Thariyat, No. 51, verse 44
14. Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 67
15. Surah 'Isra', No. 17, verse 46
16. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, the Commentary, Vol. 2, P. 382

Section 5: Allah's Chosen Servants

Surah An-Naml - Verse 59

قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَسَلاَمٌ عَلَي عِبَادِهِ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَي ءَآللَّهُ خَيْرٌ أَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

59. "Say: 'Praise be to Allah, and peace be on His servants whom He has chosen. Is Allah better, or what they associate (with Him)?'"

Not only the punishment of the wrong doers, but also the deliverance and the salvation of the believers are because of Allah's Grace, which must be thanked.

"Say: 'Praise be to Allah..."

Both the praise of the servants of Allah and peace being on them are mentioned beside the praise of Allah.

"...Praise be to Allah, and peace be on His servants..."

However, next to the end of the explanation of the life stories of five Divine prophets, as well as the fate of their peoples, the verse under discussion addresses the holy Prophet of Islam (S) and, as drawing a conclusion from the former statements and as a premise for speaking with pagans, implies that all praise

belongs to Allah Who annihilated the former disgraceful nations, such as the people of Lot, lest the kind of their corruption might spread all over the earth.

The verse announces:

"Say: 'Praise be to Allah…"

Praise belongs to the One Who sent the corruptors such as the people of Thamud and the arrogant people of Pharaoh to destruction so that their manner might not be continued as a tradition among others.

And, finally, the praise belongs to the One Who bestowed those plenty bounties and might on His faithful servants, like David and Solomon, and by which guided some misled ones like the people of Sheba.

Then, it adds:

"…and peace be on His servants whom He has chosen…"

Peace be on prophets, such as: Moses, Saleh, Lot, Solomon, and David (as), and peace be upon all Divine prophets and their true followers.

Then, the verse continues saying:

"…Is Allah better, or what they associate (with Him)?'"

That is, which is better, the Lord Who has those infinite powers, strengths and bountiful merits, or the idols which idolaters associate to Allah (s.w.t.) and they absolutely affect nothing?

In the explanations of the life stories of the former prophets, we realized that idols could never help their worshippers at the time of coming misfortunes and afflictions, while Allah did not leave the believers alone in none of their difficulties and His merciful grace came to help them.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 60

أَمَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالاَرْضَ وَأَنزَلَ لَكُم مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَاَنبَتْنَا بِهِ حَدَآئِقَ ذَاتَ بَهْجَةٍ مَا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَن تُنبِتُوا شَجَرَهَآ
أَءِلَهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ يَعْدِلُونَ

60. "Or Who created the heavens and the earth, and sent down for you water from the sky? Then We caused to grow thereby beautiful gardens; it was not in your power that you grew the trees thereof. Is there any god with Allah? Nay! They are a people who deviate."

Contemplation about Divine creation is the best way for getting near to Allah.

Every tree or plant that grows is under the observation of Allah and by His Will. After explaining some outstanding parts of the life stories of five Divine prophets, there was an expressive question in the content of the previous verse implying whether Allah, with His infinite power, is better or the worthless idols which the idolaters produced.

The verses under discussion explain this meaning and, putting the pagans under trial, state the clearest reasons of Unity.

At first, it refers to the creation of the heavens and the earth, as well as the descent of rain and the bounties emerged from it, where it says:

"Or Who created the heavens and the earth, and sent down for you water from the sky? Then We caused to grow thereby beautiful gardens..."

The Arabic word /hada'iq/ is the plural form of /hadiqah/ and, as many commentators have said, it means a garden which is surrounded with a wall and it is secured from any thing, like the pupil of eye which is protected among eyelids.

Raqib says in Mufradat:

*"The word **/hadiqah/** is originally used for a land where there is gathered some water, like the pupil of the eye that there is always water therein."*

It can be concluded from these two statements that the Arabic word /hadiqah/ means a garden which has both a wall and enough water.

The Arabic word /bahjat/ means the beauty of colour and apparent goodness which causes the spectators to be full of joy.

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an addresses the servants of Allah and says:

"...it was not in your power that you grew the trees thereof..."

You should only sow the seed and irrigate it, but He who has created life inside this seed and commands the sunlight, the life giving drops of rain, and the pieces of soil to grow this seed is only Allah.

These are some facts that none can deny, or attributes them to other than Allah. It is He Who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and is the sender of rain. He is the cause of all beauties and favours in the world.

Even paying attention to the colouring of a flower, the delicate and regular arrangement of leaves inside each other that have circulated around the central point of the flower and cry of the existence of life, are enough to acquaint man with the glory, power and knowledge of Allah. These are the facts which move the man's heart and call him toward Him.

In other words, Unity in creation (Unity of Creator) and Unity in Lordship (the Unity of the Deviser of this world) are counted as the basis of the Unity of the object of worship.

Therefore, at the end of the verse, the Qur'an says:

"…Is there any god with Allah? Nay! They are a people who deviate."

Surah An-Naml - Verses 61-62

أَمَّن جَعَلَ الاَرْضَ قَرَاراً وَجَعَلَ خِلاَلَهَآ أَنْهَاراً وَجَعَلَ لَهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزاً أَءِلَهٌ مَعَ اللَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ

أَمَّن يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَآءَ الاَرْضِ أَءِلَهٌ مَعَ اللَّهِ قَلِيلاً مَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

61. "Or Who made the earth a resting place, and made in it rivers, and placed firm mountains therein, and placed between the two seas a barrier. Is there any god with Allah? Nay! Most of them do not know."
62. "Or Who answers the distressed one when he calls on Him and removes the distress, and makes you successors in the earth. Is there any god with Allah? Little it is that you heed!"

This verse refers to the merit of peace and firmness of the earth as a resting place for human beings in this world, and compares the artificial idols of the idolaters with Allah.

It says:

"Or Who made the earth a resting place, and made in it rivers, and placed firm mountains therein, and placed between the two seas a barrier…"

Thus, there are four great bounties mentioned in this verse, three of which are about calmness.

The calmness of the earth itself which in the meantime that it rotates around itself and around the sun as well as its travel in the constellation of solar system, its movement is so monotonous and quiet that its habitants never feel it, as if it is standing fix in a point and has not any movement.

Another one is the existence of the mountains. As it was said before, they have surrounded the lands of the earth and their rots have clung to each other and have formed a strong armour against the inner pressures of the earth.

This armour resists against the outward movements created by flow and ebb resulted from the gravity of the moon, too, and it is also a barrier against the great storms that disturb the calmness of the earth.

Another one is the natural hinder which is between the two flows of a part of the sweet and salty water of some seas or oceans.

This unseen inviolable obstruction is not any thing but the difference of the density of the sweet water and that of the salt water which causes the water of the great rivers that comes into the sea does not mix with its salty water for a considerable length of time and, therefore, the flow and ebb of the sea bring it over a great part of the lands of the seashore whose farms are ready to be irrigated.

The explanation of this very meaning was cited in the commentary of Surah Furqan , No. 25, verse 53.

In the meanwhile, there are some sources of water inside the different layers of parts of the earth. The water of these sources is the origin of liveliness and greenness of cultivated farms and fruitful gardens. A part of the sources of such water is located in mountains and another part is inside the layers of the earth.

Can this system be the fruit of a deaf and blind cause and that of an origin with no intellect and knowledge?

Have idols any function in the creation of this wonderful system? Even the idolaters themselves do not claim such a thing.

So, at the end of the verse, this question is repeated, saying:

"...Is there any god with Allah?..."

And then it continues saying:

"...Nay! Most of them do not know."

In the next verse, the words are about solving difficulties, removing the distresses, and answering the supplications. It implies which is better, your worthless idols or Allah.

It says:

"Or Who answers the distressed one when he calls on Him and removes the distress..."

Yes, at the time when all the doors of the world of means are shut to a man and he is helpless from any point of view, the only one who can unlock the lock of difficulties, brings the light of hope into the hearts and opens the doors of mercy to the distressed ones is only His Pure Essence, not anyone else.

In view of the fact that this reality as a natural feeling is inside the soul of all human beings, idol worshippers also forget all their objects of worship when they entangle with the huge waves of the sea and refer to the Grace of Allah, as the Qur'an says:

“Then, if they embark on a boat, they call on Allah, making their devotion sincerely** (**and exclusively**) **to Him...”[1]

Then the holy verse implies that not only He solves and removes the difficulties but also He makes you successors in the earth.

The verse says:

“...and makes you successors in the earth. Is there any god with Allah? Little it is that you heed!”

Invoking Allah and prattling with Him is a worthy and an indispensable act. Supplicating to the Presence of Allah, and asking Him for solving the difficulties, specially at the time of distress, is necessary for everybody.

Wherever our invocation is not answered, there is a reason for it, as follows:

1- Our invocation had not been for a good deed but we considered it as good.

2- The manner in invocation has not been earnest and accompanied with distress.

3- We have not been sincere in our invocation. That is, while we have turned to the presence of Allah, we have had some hope in others, too.

It is true, of course, that sometimes, instead of accepting our supplication, He gives us something similar to it, or sometimes, instead of our demand which is not expediential for us with Allah, He banishes a misfortune from us; and sometimes instead of answering our invocation in this world, He will compensate it in the Hereafter; and sometimes instead of doing a favour to us, He favours to our descendants.

All of these meanings have been mentioned in the Islamic narrations.

Of course, the condition of fulfilment of invocation, in general, is the existence of sincerity in one’s invocation and having no hope in others. Allah is aware of those who ask Him for something in silence, but He likes that His servants ask their needs by their tongues.

It is interesting that in some Islamic narrations this verse has been rendered into the rising of Hadrat Mahdi (as).

Imam Baqir (as) in a tradition says:

“By Allah, as if I see Mahdi (*as*) *who has leaned against the Black Stone* (*of Ka‘bah*) *and calls Allah by his legitimacy...”*

Then he said:

"By Allah, he is the distressed one in the Book of Allah in the verse which says:

'Or Who answers the distressed one when he calls on Him, and removes the distress…'"2

In another tradition, Imam Sadiq (as) says:

*"This verse has been revealed concerning Mahdi from the progeny of Muhammad (S). By Allah he is the distressed one, when he keeps up two units prayer in the station of Abraham and offers a petition unto the presence of Allah, Almighty and Glorious, He answers him and removes the distress and makes him successor in the earth."*3

No doubt, the purpose of this commentary, as we have seen many instances similar to it, is not confining the concept of the verse to the specious rank of Hadrat Mahdi (as), but the verse has a vast scope of meaning and one of its clear denotation expansions is Hadrat Mahdi (as).

That time is the time that corruption has covered everywhere, the doors of hope have been shut, everybody is helpless so that humankind is in an earnest blind alley, and the state of distress is seen throughout the world.

At that time, in the most sacred point on the earth, the Holy Mosque, he invokes Allah and asks for removing the distress.

Then Allah makes this invocation the outset of his worldly sacred revolution and, according to the holy phrase:

"…and makes you successors in the earth…",

He makes him and his followers the successors on the earth.

Concerning the importance of supplication, the conditions of the acceptance of invocation, and that why some prayers will not be answered, we have discussed in details when commenting on Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 186.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 63

أَمَّن يَهْدِيكُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَن يُرْسِلُ الرِّيَاحَ بُشْرَاً بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ أَءِلَهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَي اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

63. "Or Who guides you in the darkness of the land and the sea, and Who sends the winds as heralds of glad tidings of His Mercy? Is there any god with Allah? Exalted High is Allah above what they associate (with Him)."

The 'guidance in the darkness of the land and the sea' may be the guidance that comes through stars,

because in another occurrence of the Qur'an we recite:

"...and by the stars they find the right way."[4]

The best way of theology for us is to pay attention to the difficulties and problems of life and that there appear some ways by which those problems may be solved or there come some hopes to the grace of Allah.

If we use our conscious as a judge, we will find out that there is no god save Allah.

So, this holy verse refers to the subject of guidance when it implies asking which is better idols or Allah, and says:

"Or Who guides you in the darkness of the land and the sea, and Who sends the winds as heralds of glad tidings of His Mercy?..."

There are some winds that indicate to the descent of rain. These winds, as special heralds of good tidings, come before falling rain. Their duty in fact, is also to guide people to the descent of rain.

The application of the Qur'anic word ***/bušra/*** (***heralds of glad tidings***) concerning the winds, and the word /rahmat/ (Mercy), concerning the rain, both are interesting, because the winds carry the moisture of weather by pieces of cloud arising from seas and oceans, and bring them to the dry and thirsty lands and give them goodness by the descent of rain.

Also it is raining that causes the merit of life to be seen throughout the earthly globe. Wherever it comes down, it brings goodness, mercy, bounty and life.

The Qur'anic word ***/bušr/*** is the abbreviated form of /bušur/ which is the plural form of /bašur/ that means 'the heralds of glad tidings'.

(Some more details about the function of winds and rains is mentioned in the commentary of Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 57)

At the end of the above verse, the Qur'an, addressing the pagans again, says:

"...Is there any god with Allah?..."

Then, without waiting for any answer, it immediately says:

"...Exalted High is Allah above what they associate (with Him)."

Surah An-Naml - Verse 64

أَمَّن يَبْدَؤُا الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَمَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِنَ السَّمَآءِ وَالاَرْضِ أَءِلَهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

64. “Or, Who originates the creation, then reproduces it, and Who gives you sustenance from the heaven and the earth? Is there any god with Allah? Say: ‘Bring your proof if you are truthful’.”

From verse 60 of this Surah up to this verse, the holy phrase:

“Is there any god with Allah?”

has been repeated for five times, which is for the purpose of nullification of paganism and negation of false gods.

From the viewpoint of the Qur’an, no created phenomenon vanishes, but it is from the viewpoint of us that they disappear. Resurrection is not for returning some vanished things so that some people imagine that it is an impossible job.

It is returning the creatures to their first form, after some changes that have occurred in their physical forms. In other words, the same power which created it at first, can return it again either.

Thus, this verse speaks about ‘origin and end’, and comparing their objects of worship with Allah, says:

“Or, Who originates the creation, then reproduces it...”

And He Who sustains you between this beginning and end, is Allah, it continues saying:

“...and Who gives you sustenance from the heaven and the earth?...”

Yet, do you believe that there is a god with Allah?

“...Is there any god with Allah?...”

Tell them if they have such a creed, they should bring their proof if they are truthful.

The verse says:

“...Say: ‘Bring your proof if you are truthful’.”

In fact all of the former verses were about the origin and the signs of the greatness of Allah in the world of existence as well as His merits and bounties, but in this verse the Qur’an changes the discussion into a delicate passage unto the subject of Resurrection, because the initiation of creation is itself an evidence upon the end of it, and the ability of creation is counted as a clear reasoning for Resurrection.

By this explanation, the answer of the question of many commentators is made clear. They say those pagans, who are addressed by these verses, often did not believe in Resurrection (resurrection of the body), in this case, how is it possible that we ask them and want them to confess?

The answer to this question is accompanied with a reason which makes the opposite party confess,

because when they confess that the initiation of the creation belongs to Him, and it is He Who gives these sustenance and merits, it is enough that they accept that there is a possibility of returning to life again in the Hereafter.

By the way, the purpose of 'the sustenance of the heaven' is rain, sunlight, and the like; and the purpose of '***The sustenance of the earth***' is the plants and different foodstuff which grow directly from the earth or originate indirectly from it, like cattle, mines, various things that man gets from it and enjoys them in his life.

Surah An-Naml - Verses 65-66

قُل لاَّ يَعْلَمُ مَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالاَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ

بَلِ ادَّارَكَ عِلْمُهُمْ فِي الاَخِرَةِ بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهَا بَلْ هُم مِنْهَا عَمُونَ

65. "Say: No one in the heavens and the earth knows the Unseen save Allah and they do not know when they shall, be raised'."
66. "Nay, but their knowledge falls as to the Hereafter; nay, they are in doubt about it; nay they are quite blind unto it."

Unseen is of several kinds and Allah teaches a kind of it to the prophets, as the Qur'an says:

*"(**O Prophet!**) **These are of the tidings of Unseen which We reveal unto you...**"*5

But another kind of it, such as the knowledge of the time of the occurrence of Hereafter, is particular to the Holy Essence of Allah.

The application of /man/ (who) in Arabic literature is for intellectual beings. Therefore, besides the angels, there may be some intellectual creatures in the heavens who, like human beings, will be raised up in Hereafter.

Since in the former verse the words were about Hereafter and Resurrection, these couple of verses refer to this subject from different points of view.

At first, it answers the question of those pagans who had repeatedly asked and said:

"When does Hereafter occur?",

it says:

"Say: No one in the heavens and the earth knows the Unseen save Allah and they do not know

when they shall, be raised'."

No doubt the knowledge of Unseen, including the date of the happening of Hereafter, belongs to Allah, but it does not contrast to the fact that He gives a part of the knowledge of Unseen to some ones that He desires; as Surah Jinn, No. 72, verses 26 and 27 say:

"He (alone) knows the Unseen, nor does He make anyone acquainted with His secrets."
"Except to him whom He chooses as a messenger..."

In other words, the knowledge of Unseen, essentially, independently, and illimitably, is particularized to Allah, and whatever others know is from His origin, but, in any case, the date of the occurrence of Hereafter is exceptional from this affair, and no one is aware of it.

Then the next holy verse refers to the lack of knowledge, unawareness and doubt of pagan about Hereafter.

It says:

"Nay, but their knowledge falls as to the Hereafter; nay, they are in doubt about it; nay they are quite blind unto it."

The Qur'anic word ***/'iddarak/*** has originally been /tadaruk/ in the sense of 'arranged one after another'. Thus the concept of the sentence in this verse is that they used all their knowledge about Hereafter but they gained nothing.

That is why, next to it, the verse says:

"...Nay, they are in doubt about it, nay they are quite blind unto it."

The evidence of it is that the signs of Hereafter are seen in the life of this very world, including: the return of the dead land to life in summer, the trees that become fruitful after winter, and observing the greatness of Allah's power in whole creation.

All of these are some evidence for the life possible after death, but they pass by them as if they are blind. In other words, pagans do not know when they will be raised up and they are doubtful about it. Now the verse announces that they will understand its reality in Hereafter.

Their knowledge about Hereafter will become complete in Hereafter and they will find certainty about it, a certainty which will be in vain, while they are doubtful about it in this world.

1. Surah Al-'Ankabut, No. 29, verse 65
2. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, The Commentary, Vol. 4, P. 94; and Safi, Burhan, ...
3. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 94; and Safi, Burhan, ...
4. Surah An-Nahl. No. 16, verse 16
5. Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 49

Section 6: The Resurrection, Sure Everyone Shall Be Resurrected

Surah An-Naml - Verses 67-68

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَءِذَا كُنَّا تُرَاباً وءَابَآؤُنَآ أَءِنَّا لَمُـخْرَجُونَ

لَقَدْ وُعِدْنَا هَذَا نَحْنُ وءَابَآؤُنَا مِن قَبْلُ إِنْ هَذَآ إِلآَّ أَسَاطِيرُ الاَوَّلِينَ

67. "And those who disbelieve say: 'When we have become dust, and our fathers** (**too**)**, shall we certainly be brought forth** (**again**)**?'"
68. "Indeed we had been promised this, we and our fathers before** (**too**), (**but**) **these are not but fables of the ancients."

One of the things that the enemies do is to create doubts in ideological subjects.

If we do not accept a fact, it is not a reason that it will not occur, or it does not exist.

This verse states the logic of the rejecters of Resurrection in one sentence, it says:

"And those who disbelieve say: 'When we have become dust, and our fathers** (**too**)**, shall we certainly be brought forth** (**again**)**?'"

They only sufficed to this matter that it is impossible that a man becomes dust and comes to life again, while they were dust at first and they came into being from dust. Is not it possible that they return to dust and then come forth for a new life?

It is interesting that there are eight instances in the Qur'an with the same meaning wherein, as soon as they come to imagination of impossibility of Hereafter, they have paved the path of denial.

Then they add:

"Indeed we had been promised this, we and our fathers before** (**too**)**…"

They say that they were promised it before but they found no sign of it, therefore, these promises are not anything but imaginations and superstitions.

The verse continues saying:

"…(but) these are not but fables of the ancients."

Thus, they begin from impossibility of the occurrence of Hereafter and, after that, they take it as the foundation of an absolute denial. It seemed that they expected Resurrection would happen very soon, and, since they did not see it in their own lifetime, they negated it. However, these statements are the sign of their pride and negligence.

By the way, through this wrong interpretation, they wanted to belittle the Prophet's word about the Hereafter and to say that this is one of the baseless old promises which others gave to their ancestors, too, and it was not a new matter for them to be dealt with.

Surah An-Naml – Verses 69-70

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ

وَلاَ تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلاَ تَكُن فِي ضَيْقٍ مِمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ

69. "Say: 'Travel in the earth and see how the end of the guilty (ones) has been'."
70. "And do not grieve for them nor be you straitened for what they devise."

Several times the Qur'an, by the Arabic phrase /siru/ (travel) or the phrase /'afalam yasiru/ (did you not travel), has encouraged people to travel in the earth, and in many of them the purpose has been for warning, awareness, and taking an example from the life of wrong doers.

Visiting the remained traces of the oppressors of history is one of the means of growth and training.

Former verses said about the fanatic pagans and their denial of Resurrection when they rejected it by their own derides and ridicules.

In this noble verse, the Qur'an addresses the holy Prophet (S) and says:

"Say: 'Travel in the earth and see how the end of the guilty (ones) has been'."

You say that these promises have also been given to your ancestors, and they did not give heed to them, too, nor they were damaged. But if you travel in the world and watch the traces of these criminal, sinful ones, the deniers of monotheism and Resurrection of the old, which are found in the locality of the land of Hijaz, your own land, you will understand that the fact is something else.

Do not hasten, your turn will come, too. If you do not amend yourselves, you will have the same evil fate, either.

The Qur’an has repeatedly invited people to travel in the earth and observe the traces of the old, the ruined lands of the nations who have been seized by the Divine punishment, the destroyed castles of the kings of the ancient, the scattered graves and the rotten bones of the oppressors, and the remaining ownerless properties of the haughty wealthy ones.

The Qur’an specially declares that studying these traces, which are the alive, expressive, and concrete history of the ancient people, in fact, makes the minds aware, and gives insight to them. Sometimes, visiting one of these effects creates such a storm of vigilance in the soul and spirit of man that studying several thick history books does not have it.

A rather detailed explanation in this regard has already been offered in Surah ’Al-i-‘Imran, No. 3, verse 137.

It is worth noting that, in this verse, instead of applying the Qur’anic word ***/muka��ibin/*** (***rejecters***) the word ***/mujrimin/*** (***the guilty***) has been used. This points to the fact that their denial was not because of their mistake in their research, but the origin of it was obstinacy, enmity, and being polluted by kinds of crimes.

Surah An-Naml - Verses 71-74

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَي هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

قُلْ عَسَي أَن يَكُونَ رَدِفَ لَكُم بَعْضُ الَّذِي تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَي النَّاسِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لاَ يَشْكُرُونَ

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ

71. “And they say: ‘When shall this promise (***of chastisement***) ***come to pass, if you are truthful?’”***
72. “Say: ‘May be that it is after you, a part of what you seek to hasten’.”
73. “And verily your Lord is the Lord of grace unto the people, but most of them are not grateful.”
74. “And verily your Lord well-knows what their breasts conceal and what they manifest.”

Whenever the Divine prophets warned people concerning Hereafter and the punishment of Allah, some people asked about the time of the occurrence of Hereafter. But in view of the fact that none knows the time of Hereafter except Allah, the prophets did not answer them, and they only warned the people of the principle of the punishment of Allah, not its time.

The pagans, of course, in order to observe the Divine chastisement, had some haste with ridicule, and instead of taking counsel from the warning of their kind prophet and paying attention to their fate, they ridiculed them, as the verse indicates:

"And they say: 'When shall this promise (of chastisement) come to pass, if you are truthful?'"

This verse addresses the Prophet (S) but the matter is used in plural form, because the true believers also said the same thing that the Prophet (S) announced and naturally they are the addressees of the verse, too.

Through the next verse, the Qur'an, with a very truthful tone, answers this ridiculous statement of theirs, when it says:

"Say: 'May be that it is after you, a part of what you seek to hasten'."

Why do you hasten? Why do you consider the Divine punishment so little? Why do you not have pity to yourselves? Do know that chastisement is certainly earnest! Probably the punishment of Allah has come above you because of these very words of yours, and soon will fall over you and annihilate you. What is this ceaseless obstinacy for?

The Arabic word /ridf/ is derived from /radf/ which means 'to be set after each other'.

Concerning the objective of this punishment, some of the commentators have said that its purpose is the same sharp struck that these obstinate disbelievers received in the Battle of Badr, the first Battle of Muslims against pagans, in which seventy chiefs of the pagans were killed and seventy persons of them were taken captives.

There is also another probability that the purpose of it is the common painful punishment, but at last it was removed because of the existence of the Prophet (S) among them who was:

"...a Mercy for (all) the worlds"[1]

And Surah Al–'Anfal, No. 8, verse 33 is an evidence upon this meaning.

It says:

"But Allah is not to punish them while you are among them..."

The application of the Arabic word /'asa/ (may be) in the verse is from the tongue of the Prophet (S) and it does not matter, and it is also in the word of Allah, though some commentators have considered something else. It points to the existence of premises required for something, though these premises may be faced with some barriers and they do not lead to the ultimate result.

Then, in the next verse, it states the fact that if Allah does not hasten in punishing you, it is because of

His grace and Mercy on you so that you may have enough time to amend yourselves and recompense your past.

It says:

"And verily your Lord is the Lord of grace unto the people, but most of them are not grateful."

By verse No. 74, it implies that if they imagine that the delay in their punishment is for the sake that Allah is not aware of the evil and ugly thought they have in their minds, they make a great mistake, because the Qur'an says:

"And verily your Lord well-knows what their breasts conceal and what they manifest."

He knows the secrets of their inward as much as He knows their outward deeds, and principally inward and outward, visible and invisible, all are the same for Him.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 75

وَمَا مِنْ غَآئِبَةٍ فِي السَّمَآءِ وَالأَرْضِ إِلاَّ فِي كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ

75. "And there is nothing hidden in the heavens and the earth but it is in a Manifest Book."

All the hidden affairs of mankind, intentions, the occurrence of Hereafter, the time when Divine mercy or chastisement come, and other secrets, are among the Unseen of the heavens and the earth.

The objective of the Qur'anic phrase: ***/kitabin mubin/*** here may be the Protected tablet and the infinite knowledge of Allah.

However, this verse implies that not only Allah knows their inward and outward secrets, but His knowledge is also so vast that includes every thing.

The verse says:

"And there is nothing hidden in the heavens and the earth but it is in a Manifest Book."

It is clear that the Arabic word /qa'ibah/ has a vast scope of meaning which encompasses everything that is hidden from our senses, irrespective of the concealed deeds of the servants, their esoteric intentions, and the secrets that are also hidden in the heavens and the earth, as well as appearance of Resurrection, the descent of divine punishment and the like.

Then, there is no reason that, like some commentators, we comment it on only one of these affairs.

The objective of /kitabin/, as was said in the above, is the Protected Tablet, the same source of the

infinite knowledge of Allah which has been referred to in Surah Al-'An'am, No. 6, verse 59.2

The contents of the former verses show that, in order to shirk believing in Resurrection and its responsibilities, the rejecters of Resurrection expressed their objections in three ways:

1- To return to life after becoming dust is improbable, because, as they believed, dust could not be the source of life.

2- This kind of belief belongs to the ancient, and it is not a new thing.

3- The lack of the descent of punishment for the rejecters of Resurrection, because, they said, if the rejecters must really be punished in this world, why does not this punishment seize them?

For the answer of the first and the second instances, the Qur'an has left it to their clearness, because we always see by our eyes that dust becomes the source of life. At first, we were dust and then we came into being as a living creature.

The state of a thing being old or belonging to the ancient does not decrease its importance, because the main laws of this world, from pre-eternity to future eternity, are wholly fix and unchangeable.

The fix principles in philosophical principles, mathematic problems, and other sciences are abundant. Is the Pythagoras' multiplication table invalid because it is old, or is its being ancient as a reason for its weakness?

Or if we see that justice is good and injustice is bad, and it is so and it will be so forever, is it a reason for its falseness? In principle, many times, the perpetuity of something proves its authenticity.

Concerning their third objection, the Qur'an answers that they should not hasten for meeting chastisement. It is the grace of Allah that He gives them respite and does not punish them promptly, but they must be careful that chastisement will come though it comes late.

Surah An-Naml - Verses 76-77

إِنَّ هَٰذَا الْقُرْءَانَ يَقُصُّ عَلَي بَنِي إِسْرَآئِيلَ أَكْثَرَ الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ

وَإِنَّهُ لَهُدًي وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

76. "Verily this Qur'an relates to the Children of Israel most of what they differ in."
77. "And verily it is a guidance and mercy for the believers."

This verse shows that at the time of the advent of the holy Prophet (S), the contents of the Torah and

Evangel could not solve the differences of the People of the Book, and only the Qur'an, which is a dominant over the former heavenly Books, has the ability of solving the discords.

Yes, solving the deep doctrinal differences, also by an uninstructed prophet who could neither read nor write, is the sign of miracle and legitimacy of the Qur'an.

In previous holy verse, the words were about (both) Origin and End, while the verses under discussion, by pointing to the subject of prophethood and legitimacy of the Holy Qur'an, completes this discussion.

On the other side, the former verses pointed to the infinite knowledge of Allah (s.w.t.), and in these verses this subject is explained more.

Furthermore, in those verses the addressees were pagans, but here the words are about other disbelievers, such as the Jews and their differences.

At first, it says:

"Verily this Qur'an relates to the Children of Israel most of what they differ in."

The Children of Israel had discords among them in many things; like about Maryam, Jesus, the prophet whose glad tidings had been mentioned in the Torah, and that who this prophet was, and in many ordinances and religious affairs.

The Qur'an came and said the true matter in this field. It said Jesus introduced himself explicitly and said he was a servant of Allah Who had given him a heavenly Book and assigned him a prophet,

"He (miraculously) said: 'Verily I am a servant of Allah; He has given me the Book and made me a prophet'."[3]

The Qur'an also made it clear that Jesus was born only from mother and without father, and that was not an impossible affair for Allah, because He created Adam without parents from the dust:

"The likeness of Jesus, with Allah, is as the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust..."[4]

Concerning the Divine prophet whose qualities are clearly mentioned in the Torah, the Qur'an considers that those qualifications adapt to the Prophet of Islam (S), because they adapt to none but him.

However, one of the missions of the Qur'an is to struggle against the differences which have come into being because of mixing the superstitions with the true teachings of the Divine prophets.

So, every prophet was commanded to put an end to the discord originated from distortions and confusions of right and wrong; and since the fulfilment of such an action is not possible to be done by an illiterate person in the environment of ignorance, it is clear that it is from the side of Allah.

In view of the fact that struggling against any discord is the cause of guidance and mercy, the next verse, as a general principle, says about the Qur'an:

"And verily it is a guidance and mercy for the believers."

Yes, it is guidance and mercy because the evidence of its truthfulness has lain in the magnificence of its content.

The Qur'an is guidance and mercy because it shows both the way and the style of paving the way.

The Qur'anic term ***/mu'minin/*** (***believers***) mentioned specially in this verse, is for the sake that, as was pointed out before, a person cannot enjoy this Divine source unless he has a stage of faith in him, that is, he must have a receptive state for accepting the truth and submitting to Allah.

Surah An-Naml - Verses 78-79

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِي بَيْنَهُم بِحُكْمِهِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَلِيمُ

فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّكَ عَلَى الْحَقِّ الْمُبِينِ

78. "Verily your Lord will judge between them by His judgment, and He is the Mighty, the Knowing."
79. "Therefore rely on Allah, verily you are on the manifest truth."

Judgment is one of the dignities of the Lordship of Allah, because there is no ignorance, fear, instinct and happenings effective in Him, and his judgment is completely just.

The opponents of the holy Prophet (S) used to seek pretext while the way of Faith had no ambiguity.

It was why some of the Children of Israel resisted against the facts that the Qur'an had stated and did not submit to the truth.

This verse says:

"Verily your Lord will judge between them by His judgment, and He is the Mighty, the Knowing."

In this verse, this fact, that the final Judgment is on the Hereafter Day, is not explicitly mentioned, but considering the next two verses which exactly speak about the differences between the Children of Israel and the judgment of Allah, and that the Day of Judgment is clearly mentioned therein, it makes manifest that the objective in the verse under discussion is also the same.

Surah Al-Jathiyah, No. 45, verse 17 says:

"Verily the Lord will judge between them on the Day of Judgment as to those matters in which they set differences."

Something similar to this verse is also recited in Surah Yunus, No. 10, verse 93.

Qualifying Allah (s.w.t.) to 'Mightly' and 'Knowing' is an indication to the couple of qualifications which are necessary for a judge who must be aware enough and be able to execute the judgment. Allah is the Most Mighty, the most Knowing.

Since these statements, besides expressing the greatness of the Qur'an and being a threat for the Children of Israel, are counted as a means for calmness and peace of mind of the Prophet (S), through the next verse the Qur'an says:

"Therefore rely on Allah..."

To rely on Allah Who is the Mighty, the Knowing, is relying on the One Who is invincible and Omniscient, and relying on Him Who has given you the Qur'an, with that magnificence.

The Prophet (S) is commanded to rely on Allah and does not afraid of the oppositions of the enemies, because the Qur'an says:

"...verily you are on the manifest truth."

Surah An-Naml - Verses 80-81

إِنَّكَ لاَ تُسْمِعُ الْمَوْتَي وَلاَ تُسْمِعُ الصُّمَّ الدُّعَآءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ

وَمَآ أَنتَ بِهَادِي الْعُمَيِ عَن ضَلاَلَتِهِمْ إِن تُسْمِعُ إِلاَّ مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُم مُسْلِمُونَ

80. "Verily you cannot make the dead to listen nor can you make the deaf to hear the call when they turn away backward."
81. "Nor can you lead the blind against their straying; you can make none hear save those who believe in Our revelations and who have surrendered."

In the culture of the Holy Qur'an death and life have been used for both 'the natural death and life' and 'the spiritual death and life'.

Those who are not affected by the word of Truth are considered dead in the culture of the Qur'an, and vice versa. As in many occurrences of it the Qur'an says not to think of the martyr as dead, they are

alive, happy, and being provided sustenance with their Lord.

Therefore, those obstinate, stone-hearted ones who are alive are really dead, and the martyr, who have passed away, are really alive. It is better to speak rather more clearly.

There are some stages for life:

1) The vegetal life, upon which the Qur'an says:

"...Who gives life to the earth after its death..."[5]

2) The animal life, about which the Qur'an says:

"...Who gives you life..."[6]

3) Spiritual life, as the Qur'an says:

"That it may give admonition to any (who are) alive..."[7]

That is, they are those who have safe intellect and nature.

It also says:

"...he invites you to that which gives you life..."[8]

4) The political and social life is for life, as the Qur'an says:

"And in (the law of) retaliation there is (saving) of life for you..."[9]

5) The life in the next word, as some mortals will say about it:

"...O' would that I had forwarded (good deeds) for (this) my life."[10]

However, in this holy verse, the Qur'an implies that if they do not accept this 'clear truth' and your enthusiastic words do not affect in their cold hearts, it is not wonderful for:

"Verily you cannot make the dead to listen..."

Your addressees are the alive ones, those who have a lively, vigilant, and truth-seeking spirit, not those dead who seem alive but bigotry, obstinacy, and constant committing sin have suspended their thought and contemplation.

Therefore, the verse continues saying about those who are alive but their ears are spiritually deaf:

"...nor can you make the deaf to hear the call when they turn away backward."

Then by the next verse, the Qur'an implies that if, instead of hearkening ears they had eyes with insight in such case, though the sound did not reach their ears, they might find the Straight Path by signs and marks, but it is a pity that they are blind, too, and as the verse says:

"Nor can you lead the blind against their straying..."

Thus, all the ways of conception the truth are shut to them: their hearts are dead, their ears are deaf, and their eyes are blind.

So, the Qur'an continues saying:

"...you can make none hear save those who believe in Our revelations and who have surrendered."

In fact these two verses refer to a clear collection of the factors of cognizance and the way of man's communication with outward world. The sense of discrimination and vigilant intellect is against despondency; a hearkening ear for attracting the words of Truth is against being heedless to them through the ear; and an eye with insight of observing the feature of right and wrong through the eye.

But obstinacy, contumacy, blindly imitation, and sin, make the truth seeking eyes of man blind, make his ear deaf to hear the truth, and also cause his intellect and heart (mind) not to work.

If all prophets, the saints, and the angels come to guide such persons, it will be in vain, because their communication with the outward world of their entity has utterly been ceased and they refer to only themselves.

In other words, he who is physically alive but is so engaged in lusts that he neither hears the cry of an oppressed, nor does he hear the sound of the seeker of the truth, nor does he sees the feature of an indigent, nor does he observe the effects of the greatness of Allah in the scene of creation, nor does he even contemplate about his past and future, such a person in the logic of the Qur'an is dead.

But those whose works are spread and used in the world after their death and whose thoughts, ways of manner, and conditions are introduced as guide, leader and example for others; such persons are spiritually alive forever.

However, we mention this point again that the purpose of Faith and submission is not in that he had accepted the facts of religion from before, so that it is actualization of what has already been actualized, but the aim is that man should have the mood of truth seeking state and humiliation before the command of Allah, else he will never hearken to the words of Divine prophets.

Yes, if the hearer is stone-hearted the true speech, even from a pure and eligible speaker, does not affect on him. It is like a consumed lamp which does not give light by connection with any electricity.

A weak sect from among Muslims have taken the verse:

"Verily you cannot make the dead to listen"

as a means for their deviated thought. They say that the Prophet of Islam (S) has passed away and he does not hear any word, therefore it is meaningless that we pilgrimage and, addressing him, state some matters.

The answer to this sect is that the verse is in the position of a simile.

It is like the simile of the heart of a cruel person from the point of effectiveness which is likened to stone, as the Qur'an says:

"Then your hearts hardened after that as stone..."[11]

Of course, it does not mean that for everything their hearts are like stone, because the Qur'an has accepted the purgatory life for the martyr and there are some narrations cited in the Sunnite and Shi'ite sources, as follows:

1- Muhammad-ibn-'Abdul-Wahhab in the book entitled: Al-Hidyat-us-Sunniyyah, P. 41, says:

"The prophet has a purgatory life after his death which is superior to the life of the martyr and he hears the greeting of those who greet him."

2- There are many traditions recorded in Shi'ite and Sunnite sources in this field that the Prophet (S) and Immaculate Imams (as) hear the words of those who salute them from near and far distances and answer them, and even the deeds of people are said to them.[12]

3- It is cited in Sahih Bukhari:

"The Messenger of Allah (S) spoke with the annihilated pagans of the Battle of Badr;"

and when he was asked by 'Umar, he (S) said:

"By Allah, in Whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, you are not a better hearer (than them)."[13]

4- At the end of the Battle of Jamal, Hadrat Ali (as) said:

"Make the corpse of Ka'b-ibn-Sur sit!"

Then he (as) told him, while he had been killed:

"Woe be to you that did not enjoy your knowledge and Satan caused you go astray and sent you to Hell."[14]

Surah An-Naml – Verse 82

وَإِذَا وَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَخْرَجْنَا لَهُمْ دَآبَّةً مِنَ الاَرْضِ تُكَلِّمُهُمْ أَنَّ النَّاسَ كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا لاَ يُوقِنُونَ

82. "And when the word is fulfilled against them We shall bring forth for them a moving creature from the earth that shall speak unto them, because people did not believe in Our revelations."

Some Islamic traditions announce that when human beings suspend the act of enjoining what is right and fulfil none of them, they will obligatory deserve the Divine displeasure, wrath and chastisement, and, at this time, a creature will come out from between Safa and Marwah in order to inform the believer that he is faithful and to inform the disbeliever that he is an infidel.[15]

It is then that the duty will be removed and no repentance will be accepted, and this is one of the signs of Hereafter.

However, the words in the former verses were about the pagans who hastened for meeting the Divine punishment or the occurrence of Hereafter and impatiently expected it to happen. They told the Prophet (S) why those punishments that they were promised did not come to them?

Why the Hereafter did not happen? The verse under discussion points to a part of the events that happen at the threshold of Resurrection, and depict the painful fate of these obstinate rejecters.

It says:

"And when the word is fulfilled against them We shall bring forth for them a moving creature from the earth that shall speak unto them, because people did not believe in Our revelations."

The objective of the Qur'anic phrase:

"...the word is fulfilled against them..."

is Allah's command which will be issued for the punishment they have been promised, or the occurrence of Resurrection and the manifestation of its sign.

These are the signs that by observing them every one will become humble and submissive, and he will be completely certain that the promises of Allah were true and the Hereafter is near. In that circumstance the doors of repentance will be closed, because the faith in that condition will be a constrained belief which is not accepted.

These two meanings are not separate from each other, because approaching the Day of Hereafter is accompanied with the punishment of the wrong doers.

Concerning this earthly creature and that what or who he is, and what program he will have, the Qur'an has stated ambiguously. It seems that the Qur'an wanted to speak shortly about it, for sometime the effect of the word is in that the horrible matter should be said in curtain.

The Qur'an only implies that this is a creature that, at the threshold of Resurrection, Allah will bring it forth from the earth and this creature will speak with people, saying that the people do not believe in the verses of Allah. In other words, his job is to separate the rows from each other and to distinguish between the row of rejecters and hypocrites and the row of believers.

It is evident that, by seeing this scene, the rejecters will become regretful from their own dark past, but they will not have any way to return.

In Islamic narrations, the commentary books, and Shi'ite and Sunnite sources of traditions, there are many matters about the details of the Qur'anic phrase: ***/dabbatan min al 'ard/*** (***a moving creature from the earth***) as well as its exact qualities and specifications, a short explanation of which is as follows:

The Arabic word /dabbah/ means 'a moving creature', and the word /'ard/ means 'earth', and in spite of the belief of some commentators, the word /dabbah/ is not applied only for moving creatures other than humankind, but it has a vast meaning and encompasses human beings, too.

We recite in Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 6:

"And there is no moving creature on the earth but its sustenance is on Allah..."

Surah An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 61 says:

"And if Allah were to take people to task for their inequity, He would not leave on it (the earth) a single moving being..."

Surah Al-'Anfal, No. 8, verse 22 says:

"Verily the worst of animals in the sight of Allah are the deaf, the dumb, who do not understand."

Concerning the adaptation of this term with its meaning, as it was already said in the above, the Qur'an has referred to it ambiguously, and the only quality that it has stated for it is that the creature speaks with people and compendiously defines the disbelievers.

But there are a lot of discussions in this regard in Islamic narrations and commentaries of the commentators all of which can be referred to in two commentaries:

1- A group of commentators of the Qur'an believe that it is an extraordinary living and moving creature which is not of the kind of human and has a wonderful shape. They have cited some wonders about it that are similar to the miracles of Divine prophets.

This moving creature will appear on ‘the last day’ and will speak about disbelief and Faith, and, by putting marks on the hypocrites, will make them infamous.

2- Another group, following numerous Islamic narrations recorded in this field, say that this moving creature is a man, an extraordinary man. He is a moving and active man, one of whose main actions is separating the rows of Muslims from hypocrites and putting marks on them.

Some narrations even indicate that the Rod of Moses and the Signer of Solomon will be with him; and we know that the Rod of Moses is the secret of power and miracle, and the Signer of Solomon is the secret of Divine government and domination. Thus he is a powerful man who divulges the facts.

Hathifah narrates a tradition from the Prophet (S) who, qualifying ***/dabbat-ul-’Ard/*** **(*a moving creature from the earth*)**, said:

“(He is so strong that) no one can reach him nor any one can flee from him. He puts a sign on the forehead of every believer and writes ‘believer’ between his eyes, and puts a sign on the forehead of every disbeliever and also writes ‘disbeliever’ between his eyes; and he has the Rod of Moses and the Signer of Solomon.”[16]

Some narrations have adapted it to Amir-ul-Mu’minin Ali (as). It is recorded in the commentary of Ali-ibn-’Ebrahim, narrated from Imam Sadiq (as):

“Once a man told ‘Ammar Yasir that there is a verse in the Qur’an which has disturbed his mind and caused him to be doubtful.

‘Ammar asked which verse it was and he answered the verse which says:

“And when the word is fulfilled against them We shall bring forth for them a moving creature from the earth that shall speak unto them, because people did not believe in Our revelations”,

and he added which moving creature it was.

‘Ammar said:

‘By Allah! I do not sit on the ground, nor do I eat any food nor drink any water before I show you ***/dabbat-ul-’ard/****.*

Then he, accompanying with that man, came to Ali (as) while he was having food. When he (as) saw ‘Ammar he told him to come in. ‘Ammar came near, sat down and ate food with Ali (as).

That man seriously wondered, while he has watching that scene incredibly, because ’Ammar had promised him and had made an oath that he would not eat any food before fulfilling his promise, as if he had forgotten his promise and his oath!

When 'Ammar stood up and said good by to Ali (as), that man, addressing him, said he made an oath not to eat food nor drink water, nor sit on the ground unless he show the man /dabbat-ul-'ard/. 'Ammar answered him:

'Did I not show it to you if you understood?'"

A tradition similar to this one is narrated from 'Abuthar recorded in the commentary of 'Ayyashi.[17]

'Allamah Majlesi, with a valid document, has cited in Bihar-ul-'Anwar that Ali (as) was asleep in the mosque when the Prophet (S) came in there.

He (S) roused Ali (as) from sleep and said:

"Get up O' moving creature of Allah!".

One of the companions asked the Messenger of Allah (S) whether they are right to call each other by that name, and the Prophet (S) said:

"No. this name is specialized to Ali, and he is /dabbat-ul-'ard/ about whom Allah has said in the Qur'an:

'And when the word is fulfilled against them We shall bring forth for them a moving creature from the earth that shall speak unto them, because people did not believe in Our revelations'."

Then he (S) said:

"O' Ali! On the last day, Allah will restore you to life in the best form and there will be a means in your hand by which you will mark the enemies."[18]

According to this tradition, the abovementioned verse is about 'return to life', and it adapts to the next verse which is about 'return to life'.

The Late Abul-Futuh Razi records in his commentary book concerning the above verse:

"According to the information we received by the way of our Companions, the Qur'anic phrase ***/dabbatul 'ard/*** *is an implicit declaration to Hadrat Mahdi, the Lord of the age (as)."*[19]

Keeping this tradition and the above traditions in mind, we can take a more general concept from the holy phrase /dabbat-ul-'ard/ and adapt it to each one of the great leaders who rises in 'the last day' and has an extraordinary movement by which he differentiates between right and wrong as well as believer and disbeliever.

This meaning involved in the narrations which indicate that the Rod of Moses and Signer of Solomon, which are the secrets of power, victory and government, will be with him, is a frame of reference that ***'a moving creature from the earth***' is a very active human.

And also the fact which is mentioned in the narrations that he will mark the believer and disbeliever and separate their rows, adapts to the meaning that the creature is a human.

The quality of ***'speaking with people'*** which is mentioned in the text of the Qur'an is also appropriate to this very meaning.

On the other side, there are some other references in the above verse itself added to many traditions concerning the commentary of the verse, all show that the objective of /dabbat-ul-'ard/ here is a human with the qualities mentioned in the above.

He is a very active human being who specifies the right and wrong as well as the believer from unbeliever and hypocrite. It is a human being who will appear at the threshold of Resurrection and himself is one of the signs of the greatness of Allah.

1. Surah Al-'Anbiya, No. 21, verse 107
2. The current commentary, Vol. 5, P. 145
3. Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 30
4. Surah 'Al-i-'Imran, No. 3, verse 59
5. Surah Ar-Rum, No. 30, verse 19; and Surah Al-Hadid, No. 57, verse 17
6. Surah Al-Jathiyah, No. 45, verse 26
7. Surah Yasin, No. 36, verse 70
8. Surah Al-'Anfal, No. 8, verse 24
9. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 179
10. Surah Al-Fajr, No. 89, verse 24
11. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 74
12. Kashf-ul-'Irtiyab, P. 109
13. Sahih-Bukhari, Vol. 5, P. 97
14. Sharh-i-Nahjul-Balaqah, by Ibn-'Abil-Hadid, Vol. 1, P. 248
15. Majma'-ul-Bayan, Jawami'-ul-Jami', and Manhaj-us-Sadiqin. The commentary of the verse.
16. Majma'-ul-Bayan, and tafsir-us-Safi, the commentary of the verse
17. Majma'ul-Bayan, the commentary of the verse
18. Bihar-ul-'Anwar, Vol. 53, P. 52
19. The Commentary of Abul-Futuh Razi, Vol. 8, P. 423

Section 7: The Coming of the Day of Judgment

Surah An-Naml - Verses 83-84

وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ فَوْجاً مِّمَّن يُكَذِّبُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ يوزَعُونَ

حَتَّي إِذَا جَآءُوا قَالَ أَكَذَّبْتُم بِآيَاتِي وَلَمْ تُحِيطُوا بِهَا عِلْماً أَمَّاذَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

83. "And on the Day when We shall muster out of every nation a party from those who belied Our revelations, and they shall be kept in rank."
84. "Till when they come (before their Lord), He will say: 'Did you reject My revelations while you had no comprehensive knowledge of them? Or what was it you did?'"

This verse indicates that Allah shall muster only a part out of every nation, while in Hereafter all people will be mustered. This makes it clear that the above verse does not relate to Hereafter but it relates to ***/raj'at/ 'return to life'*** in which a group of men will be quickened before Resurrection.

So, this verse says:

"And on the Day when We shall muster out of every nation a party from those who belied Our revelations, and they shall be kept in rank."

The Arabic word /hašr/ means 'to cause to camp', and 'to send out a group from their place and to move them toward the battle-field, and the like'.

The Arabic word /fauj/, as Raqib says in Mufradat, means 'a group who travel speedily'.

The Qur'anic word ***/yuza'un/*** means 'keeping a crowd of people in a manner that a group of them joins another' and this meaning is usually applied upon some tremendous crowds, the like of which was used for the troops of Solomon in this Surah.

Thus, the verse, on the whole, indicates that there will come a day when Allah will raise to life a group from any nation and will send them forth for the retribution of their deeds.

Many of the commentators have considered this holy verse as a reference for the subject of /raj'at/ 'return to life' and the return of some evil doers and good doers to this world at the threshold of the Hereafter, since if it was referring to the Resurrection and Hereafter the application of the holy phrase 'out of every nation a party' would not be correct, because in Hereafter all people will be mustered, as the Qur'an in Surah Al-Kahf, No. 18, verse 47 says:

"...and We muster them nor shall We leave out any one of them."

Another reference is that before this verse the words were about the signs of Resurrection at the end of this world, and the coming verses also point to the same subject, therefore, it is not probable that the verses before and after it speak about the events which happen before Resurrection, but the middle verse speaks of the Resurrection.

The agreement of the verses requires that all of them speak about the events before the Resurrection.

There are also many narrations in this ground that we will point to them when commenting the meaning of /raj‘at/ (return to life).

The concept of ‘Raj‘at’ is one of the famous creeds of Shi‘ah, the commentary of which, in a short sentence, is as follows. After the advent of Hadrat Mahdi (as) and at the threshold of Resurrection a group of ‘true sincere believers’ and a group of ‘very vicious disobedient infidels’ will return to this world.

The former group (true believers) will pass some degrees of development and the latter group will receive some harsh retributions.

The Late Sayyid Murtada, who is one of the dignitaries of Shi‘ah, says:

“After the advent of Hadrat Mahdi, Allah, the Exalted, will cause some of those who have passed away aforetime to return to this world in order that they take part in the rewards and honours of his victory and observe his government throughout the world, and He will cause a group of obstinate enemies to return to this world to punish them.”

Then, Sayyid Murtada adds:

“The reasoning of this sect is that no intellectual person can deny the power of Allah upon this thing, because it is not an impossible matter, while some of our opponents deny this subject so earnestly that it seems improbable and they count it impossible.”

Then he adds:

“The proof for the legitimacy of this belief is the consensus of Twelvers, because none of them has ever opposed this belief.”[1]

It is understood, of course, from the words of some of the ancient scholars of Shi’ah, and the Late Tabarsi’s in Majma‘-ul-Bayan that a very minority of Shi‘ah did not believe in this belief and commented /raj‘at/ in the sense of the return of the domination and government of Ahl-ul-Bayt (as), not the return of persons and that the dead be quickened, but their opposition is in such a way that it does not harm consensus.

However, there are a lot of statements here that, in order not to go out of the way of commentary discussion, they are referred to in short as follows:

1- No doubt, the act of restoring some dead persons to life in this world is not one of the impossible things, as the restoring all human being to life in Hereafter is quietly possible.

To surprise for such an affair is like the wonder of a group of pagans of the Age of Ignorance concerning the subject of Resurrection, and mocking it is similar to their mockery upon Resurrection, because intellect does not consider it impossible; and the Power of Allah is so vast that all these affairs are easy

for Him.

2- According to the Holy Qur'an, the occurrence of /raj'at/ (return to life) has happened for five instances of the former nations:

A. The first instance is about a prophet who was passing by a township the walls of which were ruined and the bones of the bodies of its people were scattered over there. He asked himself how Allah might restore these dead bodies to life.

Then Allah caused him to die and after one hundred years He restored him to life and asked him how long he had tarried. The prophet in answer said he tarried for one day or a part of a day. But Allah said he tarried for one hundred years.2

Whether this prophet is 'Uzayr or other prophet it is the same, the important matter is the life after death in this world.

The Qur'an says:

"...so Allah made him die a hundred years, then He raised him up..."

B. The Holy Qur'an in Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 243 also speaks about another group who, being afraid of death and, with pretext of plague, restrained from going to the Holy War. They went out of their houses and Allah issued the command of death for them and then they were restored to life.

"...Then Allah said to them; 'Die' (and they died); then He restored them to life..."

C. Again in Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verses 55 and 56, concerning the Children of Israel, we recite that a group of them, after asking Moses for seeing Allah, died because of thunderbolt, and, the Qur'an says:

"Then We raised you up after your death in order that haply you might be thankful."

D. In Surah Al-Ma'idah, No. 5, verse 110, among miracles of Jesus (as) we recite:

"...and you did raise the dead (from their graves), by My leave..."

This shows that Jesus (as) used to use this miracle of his repeatedly to raise the dead, and this is counted as a kind of /raj'at/ for some men.

E. Concerning the dead body and finding his murderer, the Children of Israel were quarrelling. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 73 says:

"So, We said: 'strike him (the corps) with a part of it (the sacrificed cow)'. Thus, Allah gives life to the dead and shows you of His signs, so that you might understand."

In addition to these five instances, there are also some other instances mentioned in the Qur'an, like the

story of ‘the Companions of the Cave’ which was something similar to /raj‘at/ (return to life); and the story of Hadrat Ebrahim and the four birds that, after killing them, returned to life again in order to illustrate the possibility of Resurrection of human beings for him.

This is also notable in the subject of /raj‘at/.

However, how is it possible that a person accepts the Qur’an as a heavenly Book and, with these clear verses, does also reject the possibility of /raj‘at/ (return to life)?

Basically, is /raj‘at/ something other than returning to life after death? Is /raj‘at/ not counted as a small example of Resurrection in this small world? He who accepts Resurrection with its vast scale, how can he deny the subject of /raj‘at/ (return to life in this world)?

3– Whatever was said, up to here, proved the possibility of the occurrence of /raj‘at/ (return to life), and there are also many traditions narrated from Ahl–ul–Bayt (as) which confirm its happening. Since our discussion has not the capacity of mentioning all of them, it is enough to refer to the number of them which the Late ‘Allamah Majlesi has collected and introduced.

He says:

“How is it possible that a person believes the truthfulness of the statements of Ahl–ul–Bayt (as) but he does not accept the widely transmitted traditions of /raj‘at/, the explicit traditions the number of which reaches about two hundred and that more than forty reliable persons of the narrators and famous scholars have referred to them in more than fifty books. If these traditions are not widely transmitted, what kind of tradition is widely transmitted?”[3]

A Few Traditions as Examples

1– Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“The first one to whom the earth (grave) will be cleft and he will return to the world is Husayn–ibn–Ali (as).”

2– Imam Baqir (as) said to ‘Bukayr–ibn–’A‘yan’:

“Verily the Messenger of Allah (S) and Ali (as) will return to life.”

3– Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“There will come with Gha’im (as) twenty seven men from behind Kufah; fifteen persons of them are from the people of Moses (as), those who used to guide (others) to the Truth and to call (them) to it; and seven persons of the Companions of Kahf; and Yusha‘–ubnu–Nun, Salman, ’Abu–Dujanat–il–’Ansari, Miqdad, and Malik–i–’Ashtar will be his helpers and governors.”[4]

Imam Sadiq (as) in a tradition says:

“Verily /raj‘at/ (return to life) is not general but it is informal, because only a group will return to life that have pure faith or pure infidelity.”[5]

This holy tradition defines the philosophy of /raj‘at/, because a group of sincere believers who had encountered some barriers on the path of spiritual perfection in their life and their perfection remained incomplete, the Divine Wisdom requires that they continue their path of perfection by returning again to this world, so that they can be witnesses of the worldly government of Truth and Justice and participate in building this government, since participation in the formation of such a government is one of the greatest honours.

On the contrary, some of the hypocrites and obstinate tyrants, besides their special retribution in Hereafter, must tolerate some punishments in this world similar to what the people of Pharaoh, ‘Aad, Thamud and Lot tolerated, and its only way is /raj‘at/ (return to life in this world).

During the period of /raj‘at/ (return to life in this world), the disbelievers will be reprimanded for both their beliefs and their behaviour.

Concerning the time when they are brought for reckoning, the verse says:

“Till when they come (before their Lord), He will say: ‘Did you reject My revelations while you had no comprehensive knowledge of them? Or what was it you did?’”

The speaker of this statement is Allah and the objective of the Qur’anic term ***/’ayati/*** is the miracles of Divine prophets, or the commandments of Allah, or all of them.

And the purpose of the phrase ‘you had no comprehensive knowledge’ is that without doing any research about it and being unaware of the reality of a matter, they began to reject it. This is the ultimate ignorance of a person that with rather no research and having no knowledge about something tries to deny it.

In fact, they will be asked of two things: one is their rejection while having not any research, and the other is the deed they used to do.

If the above verse is taken as about Hereafter and Resurrection, its meaning is clear, but if it refers to /raj‘at/ (return to life in this world), as the agreement of the verse requires, it points to this fact that at the time of returning some of the wrong doers to this world, the one who is vicegerent of Allah and is the ‘master of affairs’ will investigate them and then he will punish them in this world as much as they deserve.

This punishment does not hinder their Hereafter punishment. It is like the state of many of the criminals who tolerate the ‘fixed punishment for certain crimes’ in this world and, if they do not repent, their proper

chastisement in Hereafter is reserved.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 85

وَوَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِم بِمَا ظَلَمُوا فَهُمْ لاَ يَنطِقُونَ

85. "And the word will be fulfilled against them because they were unjust so they shall not speak."

The Divine punishment of the oppressors is decisive and the promise of the Divine chastisement has been said to them aforetime. Of course usually the cause and factor of the man's afflictions is he himself.

However, concerning the punishment, this verse implies that when the command of Allah will be issued against them, they will not have anything to say.

It says:

"And the word will be fulfilled against them because they were unjust so they shall not speak."

This punishment is their chastisement in this world, if the verse is commented in the sense of /raj'at/ (return to life in this world); and it means the chastisement of Hereafter, if the verse is commented in the sense of Hereafter.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 86

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِيَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِراً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

86. "Have they not seen how We have appointed the night that they may rest therein, and the day to give light? Verily, in this are signs for the people who believe."

The function of the darkness of night in man's tranquility of nerves, and the light of the day in man's activity are the scientific issues which have been proved today.

Night is one of the bounties and mercy of Allah upon people, and it is the sign of Divine knowledge and power, thus, ignoring the function of the night is an example of the 'ignorant rejection'.

These verses refer to the subjects of origin and end, and the signs of Power and greatness of Allah (s.w.t.) in the world of existence.

The Qur'an also refers to the events of Resurrection, when it says:

“Have they not seen how We have appointed the night that they may rest therein, and the day to give light? Verily, in this are signs for the people who believe.”

This is not the first time that the Qur’an speaks about the refreshing effects of night and day, and the system of light and darkness; and it is not the last time, either.

This repetition is for the fact that the Qur’an is a Book for education and training of men, and we know that the principles of education sometimes require that a subject should be repeated and reminded in different occurrences, so that that subject might be completely understood.

The tranquility that can be obtained from night is a certain scientific fact. The dark curtain of night not only is an compulsory means for the cessation of activities of the day, but also it has a deep effect on the nerves of men and other animals and causes them to be in a deep sleep and rest, or as the Qur’an says, to be in a ‘silence’.

Also, scientifically there is no room for any doubt that the light of the day has a relation with the struggle movement and activity of man during the day which is the property of the sunlight. Sunlight not only brightens the scene of life and makes man’s eyes active, but also it awakens all the particles of the entity of man and makes them to move.

This verse makes manifest a part of ‘Lordly Unity’, and in view of the fact that the true object of worship is the Lord and Administrator of the world of existence, it nullifies the idols and causes the idolaters to review their creeds.

It is necessary for man to note this point that he must adapt himself with this system; to rest at night and to have effort and endeavour during the day, so that he can be safe and active. Spending the night like some sensual persons, and sleeping in the morning until noon, is wrong.

It is interesting that the Arabic word /mubsir/, which originally means ‘clear-sighted’, has been used as a modifier for the day while it is a modifier for human beings in the day. This is a kind of beautiful emphasis for it.

This difference of meaning which is seen in the statement of the benefit of the night and the day inside the verse, and once it says /liyaskunu fih/ and then in another place it says /mubsiran/ may be a hint to this fact that the main aim of the night is rest and peace, but the aim of the light of the day is not ‘seeing’ but seeing is a means for reaching the merits of life and enjoying them. (Be careful)

However, though this noble verse speaks directly about Monotheism and contrivance of the world of existence, it can contain a tender hint to the subject of Resurrection, too, because sleep is like death and wakefulness is like life after death.

At the end, some things that are introduced as the means of peace and tranquility are stated as follows:

1- Remembrance of Allah:

"...Behold! By Allah's remembrance (only) the hearts are set at rest."[6]

2- Unseen succour:

"It is He Who sent down tranquility into the hearts of the Believers..."[7]

3- Some sacred effects and objects:

"...That the Ark of Covenant will come to you, wherein shall be a tranquility from your Lord..."[8]

4- The encouragement of the Divine saints:

"...Surely your prayers are a comfort for them..."[9]

5- Residence and house:

"And Allah appointed a place of rest for you of your houses..."[10]

6- Spouse:

"...He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you dwell in tranquility with them..."[11]

7- The Night:

"...We have appointed the night that they may rest therein..."[12]

It should be said that the occurrence of the descent of the Qur'an, the Prophet's 'ascension to Heaven', and the proper time for prayer and supplication all are at night, though some of the deluded persons misuse the bounty of the darkness of the night and commit some sins in it. In the present age, people seek for tranquility somewhere else and, therefore, they do not obtain it.

Today the world is engaged with technology, weapon, wealth, power, and political relations and, because of losing spirituality, it cannot find tranquility. There are also many persons who have been polluted with narcotic matters, alcoholic liquors, sex, etc. and are completely sinful. To find the reality in this regard, it is enough to refer to the investigations of crimes in the world.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 87

وَيَوْمَ يُنفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَفَزِعَ مَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَن فِي الاَرْضِ إِلاَّ مَن شَآءَ اللَّهُ وَكُلٌّ أَتَوْهُ دَاخِرِينَ

87. "And (remind them of) The Day when the Trumpet will be blown and those who are in the heavens and those who are in the earth shall be terrified except him whom Allah will please, and

all shall come to Him in utter humility."

The destruction of the system of existence, the death of people, and beginning of Hereafter will occur with terrible sound of trumpet, (the Trumpet will be blown).

So, this noble verse, referring to the Resurrection and its preliminary events, announces:

"And (remind them of) The Day when the Trumpet will be blown and those who are in the heavens and those who are in the earth shall be terrified except him whom Allah will please, and all shall come to Him in utter humility."

It is understood from the whole verses of the Qur'an that the Trumpet will be blown two or three times. One of them will be at the end of the world and at the threshold of Resurrection, when horror will encompass all. The second time is when, by hearing it, everybody will die. (These two Blasts of Trumpet may be the same).

The third time will be at the time of resurgence and establishment of Hereafter when by the blown of the Trumpet quickening of the dead will occur and all the dead return to begin a new life.

Commentators are divided in the belief that the above verse refers to the first and second Blast or the third Blast. There are some frames of reference both in this verse and the coming verses which involve both of them. Some other commentators believe that it points to all of these Blasts.

But the apparent of the verse shows that it relates to the first Blast that occurs at the end of the world, because the Qur'anic word ***/faza'/*** which means a fear and horror that fills the whole heart of man is counted of the signs of this Blast; and we know that, in the Blast of Hereafter, fear and horror is because of deeds, reckoning, and retribution, not because of the effect of the Blast.

In other words, the apparent of the Qur'anic term ***/fa fazi'a/,*** mentioned in the verse, indicates that this fear and horror is because of blowing in the Trumpet which belongs to the first Blast, since not only the last Blast does not create any horror, but also it is the cause of life and movement, and if there is any fear at that time it is for the deeds of man himself.

The Arabic word /nafx/ means 'to blow', and the word /sur/ means 'trumpet'. When offering the commentary of Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, verse 68, we will explain the different ideas of the commentators concerning its purpose.

The holy phrase 'except him whom Allah will please' points to those who are good and pure, irrespective of the angels and the believers who are in the heavens and the earth. As the result of their Faith, they will have a special tranquility, and neither will the first Blast make them terrified, nor the last one.

And also in the next verses we recite:

"Whoever brings good, for him shall be better than it, and they shall be secure from the terror on that Day."13

The last sentence of the verse under discussion which says:

"All shall come to Him in utter humility"

apparently is general and there is no exception in it, because even the prophets and saints will be humble before Him.

And Surah As-Saffat, No. 37, verses 127-128 which says:

"...therefore they shall most surely be brought up,"
"Except the chosen servants of Allah, the purified ones.",

contain no contradiction with the generality of the verse under discussion, because the abovementioned verse refers to the principle of attendance in gathering-place of resurrection before Allah and secondly refers to the attendance in the scene of reckoning the deeds.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 88

وَتَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ صُنْعَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَتْقَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ إِنَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَفْعَلُونَ

88. "And you see the mountains and think them firmly fixed but they shall pass away as the passing away of the cloud. It is the work of Allah Who has made everything in perfect order. Verily He is Aware of what you do."

The Arabic word /sun'/ is used for a work which is based upon knowledge, accuracy, and skill.

The universe is moving; even the mountains which seem motionless have motion and this motion is the sign of the Wise Power of Allah.

This verse points to another sign of the grandeur of Allah in the expansion of the world of existence.

It says:

"And you see the mountains and think them firmly fixed but they shall pass away as the passing away of the cloud. It is the work of Allah Who has made everything in perfect order..."

The One, in Whose program of creation all these orders and accuracy are found, is certainly aware of the deeds we do.

The verse says:

"...Verily He is Aware of what you do."

Many commentators believe that the above mentioned holy verse is a hint to the events that will happen at the threshold of Resurrection, for we know that at the end of this mortal world and at the beginning of the next world there will happen some great earthquakes, explosions, and transformations wherein mountains will surely burst asunder.

This meaning is explicitly mentioned in many Suras in the end of the Qur'an.

Of course, this verse being set among the verses of Resurrection is the reason and evidence of this commentary.

But there are several frames of reference in the verse that verify another commentary. For example, the abovementioned verse is of the kind of verses of Unity and the signs of the greatness of Allah in this very world; and it points to the 'movement of the earth globe', the movement which is not sensible for us.

Thus, some parts of the verses under discussion are about Unity and some parts are about Resurrection.

The conclusion we can take from this commentary is that these mountains which we consider motionless are moving fast. Certainly, the movement of these mountains, without the movement of the lands they are on them, is meaningless. Thus, the meaning of the verse is that the earth moves fast like the movement of the pieces of the cloud.

According to the calculations of the modern scientists, the movement of the earth around itself is about 30 kilometers a minute, and its rotation around the sun is more than this.

The reason why the Qur'an has put the mountains in the center of discussion here, maybe for that mountains from the point of heaviness, weight and firmness are referred to in parables, and for explaining the Power of Allah, are counted a better example.

When the mountains, with this greatness and heaviness they have, move (accompanied with the earth) by the command of Allah, His Power over everything is proved.

However, the abovementioned verse is one of the scientific miracles of the Qur'an. We know that the first scientists who found out the movement of the sphere of the Earth were Galileh from Italy, and Kepernic from Netherlands.

They introduced this idea to the world in the end of sixteenth century and at the beginning of seventeenth century A.D., although the authorities of the Church violently condemned them.

But the Qur'an many years before them removed the curtain from over this fact, and announced the movement of the earth in the above form as a sign of Unity.

Therefore, informing of the movement of mountains is among the scientific miracles of the Qur'an, and in recognition of Allah everything is fix and perfect in its place, as the Qur'an says about Him:

"Who has made every thing in perfect order."

Surah An-Naml - Verses 89-90

مَنْ جَآءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِنْهَا وَهُم مِن فَزَعٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ ءَامِنُونَ

وَمَنْ جَآءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَكُبَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ إِلاَّ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

89. "Whoever brings good, for him shall be better than it, and they shall be secure from terror on that Day."
90. "And whoever brings evil, those shall be cast down on their faces, in the (***Hell***) ***Fire; 'Are you rewarded*** (***for***) ***aught except what you used to do?'"***

One of the bounties of the Qur'an is that it has let the way open to all people for development and happiness.

The holy verse says:

"Whoever brings good, for him shall be better than it, and they shall be secure from terror on that Day."

This merit is for all people without considering their age, race, and sex. The word 'good' is used in general meaning /al hsanah/, in order that it concludes all favours, including: accepting the leadership of the Truth, the way of the Truth, the word of the Truth, the job of the Truth, and the choice of the Truth, the examples of some of which have been referred to in Islamic narrations.

But if the good deed, from whoever it is, is not destroyed because of hypocrisy, pride, haughtiness, and sin and comes to its destination safely, will deserve some additional rewards:

(***Whoever brings good...***).

But pleasures, insolence, and contumacies which come into being in the world as the result of sin, by burning in Hereafter, will be changed into disgrace and degradation.

The verse says:

"Whoever brings good, for him shall be better than it, and they shall be secure from terror on that Day."

Upon the objective meaning of the Qur'anic word ***/hasanah/*** commentators have offered different beliefs. Some of them have rendered it into the term 'Unity' and the holy phrase of: 'There is no god but Allah', and also into 'having faith in Allah'.

Some of them believe that it refers to the mastership of Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) and immaculate Imams (as). This meaning has been emphasized in many traditions narrated from Ahl-ul-Bayt (as).

For example: in a tradition Imam Baqir (as) says that one of the followers of Ali (as) who was called 'Abu-'Abdullah Jabali came to him (as) and Imam asked him whether he might inform him of the meaning of the word of Allah that says:

"Whoever brings good, for him shall be better than it, and they shall be secure from terror on that Day."

He answered:

"Yes, may I be your ransom, O' Amir-ul-Mu'minin!"

Imam said:

"Good is cognition of mastership and the love of us, Ahl-ul-Bayt; and sin is the denial of mastership and enmity against us, Ahl-ul-Bayt."[14]

Of course, as we have said repeatedly, the scope of the meaning of the verses is vast and the Arabic words /hasanah/ and /sayyi'ah/ have also here such a vast concept that envelops all the good deeds, including: faith in Allah, the Messenger of Islam, and the mastership of the Immaculate Imams (as), that are at the top of every good deed, and do not hinder that other righteous deeds be involved in the meaning of the verse.

And that some persons have become worried because of this generality concerning the word 'good' and said whether there can be found anything better than the Faith in Allah to be its reward. Its answer is clear because the pleasure of Allah is also higher than Faith. In other words, all of these things are the preliminaries for that and the consequence is prior to the preliminary.

Another question here is that the apparent of some verses (like Surah Al-Hajj, No. 22, verse 2) shows that the terror of Resurrection will cover all, then how are the possessors of good as an exception from it?

Surah Al-'Anbiya', No. 21, verse 103 answers this question, where it says:

"The Great Terror (***of that Day***) ***shall not grieve them..."***

And we know that the 'Great terror' is the terror of the Hereafter Day, and the Terror of arriving into Hell, not the horror which will appear at the time of the Blast.

By the way, the Arabic word /kubbat/, mentioned in the verse, means: 'to be cast down'.

Then, the next verse refers to those who are situated in a place opposite to this group.

The verse says:

"And whoever brings evil, those shall be cast down on their faces, in the** (**Hell**) **Fire…"

Such people cannot expect anything except this.

The verse continues saying:

"…'Are you rewarded** (**for**) **aught except what you used to do?'"

The Arabic term /kubbat/ is derived from /kabb/ which originally means 'casting something on face down', and, therefore, mentioning the word 'faces' in the above verse is for emphasis.

As the worst kind of punishment is said that this group shall be cast down on their faces in the (Hell) Fire. In addition, since they used to turn their faces away when they confronted the Truth, and they used to go toward sins with the same faces, now they should meet such a punishment.

The sentence:

"…'Are you rewarded** (**for**) **aught except what you used to do?'"

may be the answer to the question that someone may say this punishment is a grievous punishment. They will be answered that those are the same deeds of theirs that have seized them and they have not any reward except their own deeds.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 91

إِنَّمَآ أُمِرْتُ أَنْ اعْبُدَ رَبَّ هَذِهِ الْبَلْدَةِ الَّذِي حَرَّمَهَا وَلَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

91. "(O' Muhammad say:) 'I am commanded only to serve the Lord of this city, Who has made it sacred, and His are all things; and I am commanded that I should be of those who submit'."

The holy Prophet (S) is under the command of Allah, the Almighty.

A leader must announce his severity and decisiveness to people and say to them that whether they believe or not he will continue his way. The day when Mecca was conquered by Muslims, the Messenger of Allah (S) arrived in Mecca and broke the idols therein.

Then he stood at the threshold of Ka'bah and said:

“Verily Allah has respected Mecca (since the first day until the Hereafter).”[15]

This verse, addressing the Prophet of Islam (S), reiterates some facts. It implies that he (S) should tell the people that he does his duty whether the obstinate pagans believe or not.

The verse says:

“(O’ Muhammad say:) ‘I am commanded only to serve the Lord of this city...”

This sacred city (Mecca) is the secure sanctuary of Allah, and is the noblest point on the earth. It is the oldest temple of Monotheism.

Yes, The Prophet (S) is commanded to worship the Lord Who has made this city (Mecca) sacred, and He has appointed some specialities for it. He has assigned some particular respects, ordinances, and prohibitions for it that other cites in the world do not have them.

But do not consider that only this city belongs to Allah, because everything in the world of existence belongs to Him.

The verse continues saying:

“...Who has made it sacred, and His are all things...”

The second order that he (S) is commanded to fulfil is that he should absolutely submit the commandment of Allah, not other than it.

The verse says:

“...and I am commanded that I should be of those who submit’.”

Thus, the Prophet (S) states his two main missions which are ‘worshipping Allah, the One’, and ‘being absolute obedient to His commandment’.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 92

وَأَنْ أَتْلُوَا الْقُرْءَانَ فَمَنِ اهْتَدَى فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَن ضَلَّ فَقُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَنَاْ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ

92. “And that I should recite the Qur’an (to people), so whoever is guided aright, he is guided aright to his own gain, and whoever goes astray, then say: ‘I am only (one) of the warners’.”

Next to Monotheism, the most important mission of the holy Prophet (S) was reciting the Divine verses to people. The benefit and harm of belief and disbelief of people, whether they accept the truth or not, return to them.

By this verse, the Prophet of Islam (S) announces that he is commanded to recite the Qur'an to the people of Mecca and to invite them to fulfil its commandments, to use the Qur'an as a light of guidance, to drink much from its life-giving source, and to rely on its guidance in all his programs.

Yes, Qur'an is a means for him in reaching to those two sacred aims and struggling against any infidelity, deviation, and aberration.

The verse says:

"And that I should recite the Qur'an (to people)..."

Then, he (S) adds to the abovementioned statement implying that the people should not think that their belief is beneficial for him or more important than that, for Allah, the Great. No, all the benefits of guidance reach them both in this world and the Next.

The verse continues saying:

"...so whoever is guided aright, he is guided aright to his own gain..."

And whoever goes astray his burden is over his own shoulder, because the Prophet (S) is only a warner and the evil consequences of their deeds do not reach him. His duty is to convey the clear revelation, and his duty is also showing the way and that how it can be paved, but he who is eager to remain in aberration he has caused only his own misfortune.

It is interesting that concerning guidance it says:

"whoever is guided aright, he is guided aright to his own gain",

but concerning aberration it does not say it is to his own loss; it says:

"I am only (one) of the warners".

This difference in statement may refer to this fact that the prophet is never silent in front of those who go astray and he does not leave them alone to their own state, but he constantly warns them and he does not become tired of doing it continuously, because he is a warner.

The verse says:

"...and whoever goes astray, then say: 'I am only (one) of the warners'."

This point is noteworthy that this Surah has begun with the statement of the importance of the Qur'an and it ends with the emphasis on recitation of the Qur'an, so the beginning and the end of the Surah is about the Qur'an.

Surah An-Naml - Verse 93

وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ سَيُرِيكُمْ ءَايَاتِهِ فَتَعْرِفُونَهَا وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ

93. "And say: 'Praise be to Allah. Soon He will show you His signs that you shall recognize them, and your Lord is not heedless of what you do'."

The Qur'anic phrase ***/'al hamdu lillah/*** (***praise be to Allah***) is the best sentence for praising Allah that not only the Prophet (S) has repeatedly been commissioned to say it, but also everyday all Muslims have to repeat it through Surah Al-Hamd.

Therefore, in this verse, which is the last verse of Surah An-Naml, the command is that he should praise Allah for all these great bounties, specially for the bounty of guidance.

It says:

"And say: 'Praise be to Allah..."

This praise relates to both the bounty of the Qur'an, and the guidance of Allah, and also can be a preparation for the next sentence when it says:

"...Soon He will show you His signs that you shall recognize them..."

This meaning in this verse indicates that by the passing of time and the development of science, knowledge, and man's wisdom, everyday some new secrets of the revelations in connection with the world of existence will be unveiled and, a day after another, humankind can be acquainted more and more with the greatness of the Power of Allah and the depth of His knowledge, and this property of Divine revelation will never be ceased and will continue as long as man lives.

Yet, if you go astray and pave the way of deviation, you must know that your Lord is never heedless of the deeds you do.

The verse says:

"...and your Lord is not heedless of what you do'."

You should not imagine that if Allah postpones your retribution because of His grace and mercy it is for the reason that He is not aware of your deeds, or that its reckoning and record are not preserved.

The above ending sentence of the verse, which has exactly been repeated in nine occurrences of the Qur'an or with a little difference, is a short sentence and it is an expressive warning upon all human beings.

O Lord! Show us a part of the signs of Your greatness each day so that we know You everyday better and more than before, and that we thank You for these bounties You have bestowed on us!

O Lord! A mass of difficulties have surrounded us, and the enemies, both inside and outside, are trying hard to quench Your Light!

O Lord! It is You Who gave Solomon those abilities, and strengthened Moses to stand against Pharaoh; cause us to be victorious against the enemies, and destroy those of them who are not eligible to be guided like the People of 'Ad, the People of Thamud, and the People of Lot.

1. Safinat-ul-Bihar, Vol. 1, P. 511
2. Surah Baqarah, No. 2, verse 259
3. Bihar-ul-'Anwar, Vol. 53, P. 122
4. Mizan-ul-Hikmah, Vol. 4, P. 1982; Tafsir-us-Safi, Vol. 4, P. 76; Bihar, Vol. 53, P. 39
5. Bihar-ul-'Anwar, Vol. 53, P.39
6. Surah Ar-Ra'd, No. 13, verse 28
7. Surah Al-Fath, No. 48, verse 4
8. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 248
9. Surah At-Taubah, No. 9, verse 103
10. Surah An-Nahl, No. 16, verse 80
11. Surah Ar-Room, No. 30, verse 21
12. Surah An-Naml, No. 27, verse 86
13. The current Surah, verse 89
14. The Commentaries of As-Safi, Burhan, Atyab-ul-Bayan, Majma'-ul-Bayan, Jawami'-ul-Jami', following the verse.
15. The Commentary of Kanz-ud-Daqa'iq

Surah Al-Qasas, Chapter 28

(The Narratives)
No. 28 (Revealed at Mecca)
88 Verses in 9 Sections

The Virtue of Recitation of Surah Al-Qasas

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

The holy Prophet (S) in a tradition said:

"The one who recites Surah Al-Qasas will be given ten rewards as many as the number of all those who

assented Moses and those who rejected him, and there is no angel in the heavens and the earth but he will attest to his rightfulness in Hereafter."[1]

Imam Sadiq (as) in another tradition says:

"The one who recites suras Al-Qasas, An-Naml, and Ash-Shu'ara by the night before Friday, he will be of the friends of Allah, will be nigh to Him, and will be supported by Him; and in this world he will not encounter a sever poverty, insecurity and disquiet, and in Hereafter Allah will bestow on him so much merits that he will be pleased and even more than being pleased."[2]

It is evident that all of these rewards will be given to the one who, by reciting this Surah, tries to be in the row of Moses (as), the true believers, and those who struggle against the wrongdoers such as Pharaoh and Korah.

When confronting the difficulties, he must not knee before the enemies and accept the disgrace of submission, for all these many rewards are not given to anyone cheaply. They are specified to those who usually recite the Surah, contemplate its content, and fulfil them accordingly.

1. Majma'-ul-Bayan, the commentary
2. Thawab-ul-'A'mal, according to the commentary of Nur-uth-Thaqalayn

Section 1: The Narrative of Moses

Surah Al-Qasas - Verses 1-3

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

طسم

تِلْكَ ءَايَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ

نَتْلُواْ عَلَيْكَ مِن نَبَإِ مُوسَي وَفِرْعَوْنَ بِالْحَقِّ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

1. "Ta. Sin. Mim."

2. "There are verses of the Book (that makes the truth) clear."

3. "We recite to you some of the story of Moses and Pharaoh in truth, for a people who believe."

The Qur'an, the eternal miracle of Islam, has been formed of these very Arabic letters. If you think that it is the word of a human, you may bring the like of it, too.

This is the fourteenth Surah of the Qur'an which begins with 'the abbreviated letter', and the form Ta. Sin. Mim., in particular, is for the third and the last time that has been mentioned in the Qur'an.

As we have cited repeatedly, the Abbreviated letters of the Qur'an have different interpretations which we have referred to at the beginning of Suras of Al-Baqarah, 'Al-i-'Imran, and Al-'A'raf.

Moreover, there are a lot of traditions which indicate that the letters Ta. Sin. Mim., in the Qur'an are some abbreviation signs of the attributes of Allah or sacred places, but this does not hinder the famous commentary, which we have repeatedly emphasized on, that Allah desires to make clear this fact to all that this great Heavenly Book which is the source of a great revolution in the history of man and contains the complete program of the happy life of humankind, has been formed of a simple means such as alphabetical letters which everybody can pronounce.

This is the ultimate greatness of the Qur'an that it produces such an extraordinary important product from such simple materials which every body possesses.

Perhaps this is for the same reason that immediately, after these abbreviated letters, it refers to the greatness of the Qur'an and implies that these great verses are the verses of the Book manifest, the Book which is clear itself and makes clear the man's way of happiness both.

It says:

"There are verses of the Book (that makes the truth) clear."

The Qur'anic phrase ***/kitabun mubin/*** has been rendered to '***Protected Tablet***' in some verses of the Qur'an, like Surah Yunus, No. 10, verse 61 where it says:

"...not anything lesser than that or greater but are (recorded) in a Clear Book.",

and Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 6 where it says:

"...All is (recorded) in a Clear Book",

but in the verse under discussion, with the frame reference of mentioning /'ayat/ (verses) and the phrase /natlu 'alayka/ (We recite to you) mentioned in the next verse, it means 'Qur'an'.

Here the word Qur'an has been qualified by /mubin/ (clear), and the Arabic word /mubin/, as understood

from lexicon, is used both in the senses of ‘transitive’ and ‘intransitive’ case, viz. it means something which is ‘clear’ and ‘makes clear’. So, the Holy Qur’an, with its clear content, makes clear the Truth from untruth, and the true way from false way.

After mentioning this short proposition, referred to in the above, in the next verse the Qur’an points to the life story of Moses and Pharaoh where it says:

“We recite to you some of the story of Moses and Pharaoh in truth, for a people who believe.”

The application of the word /min/, here, points to this fact that whatever is mentioned here is a part of the concerning adventurous story the statement of which has been appropriate and necessary.

And the application of /bil haqq/ in the verse points to this fact that whatever has been mentioned here is free from any superstition, old fables, and false matters; and it is a recitation with truth and exact reality.

The application of the phrase /liqaumin yu’minun/ (for a people who believe) is an emphasis on this fact that those believers who were under pressure at that time in Mecca, and the like of them, should reach to this fact, by hearing this story, that how abundant the enemy’s power, number of persons, and their forces is, and how the number of believers is apparently little and they are under pressure, the power of Allah is above all and they must not feel weakness in themselves.

The Lord Who caused Moses to be brought up in the bosom of Pharaoh to destroy him; the Lord Who made the oppressed slaves as the governors on the earth, and made the cruel oppressors abject, mean, and annihilated; the Lord Who protected a little baby in the rushing waves of water, and buried thousands of thousand strong people of Pharaoh inside the sea, is able to save you, too.

Yes, the main target of these verses is believers, and this recitation has been accomplished for them. They are the believers who can be respired by it and find their way to the aim among the mass of difficulties.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 4

إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلاَ فِي الاَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعاً يَسْتَضْعِفُ طَآئِفَةً مِّـنْهُمْ يُذبِّـحُ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَآءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

4. “Verily Pharaoh exalted himself in the land (***of Egypt***) ***and divided its people into sections, weakening a group of them, he slaughtered their sons and spared alive their females, verily he was of the mischief- makers.”***

The Arabic word /šiya‘/ is the plural form of /ši‘ah/ which originally means ‘following’ and ‘obeying’, but since in a group there are some persons who usually follow some others, this word is used in the sense

of a group, too.

The Arabic word, /nisa'/ means 'women', but in this verse it may mean 'daughters' because it has come as the opposite of 'sons'.

The word /fir'aun/ is not the name of a person, but it had been the title of the kings of Rome.

However, in this verse, the Qur'an says:

"Verily Pharaoh exalted himself in the land (of Egypt)..."

Pharaoh was a very weak person who, as the result of ignorance, lost his own personality and went astray so far that he claimed to be deity.

The application of the Arabic word /'al 'ard/ (the land) in the verse is an indication to the land of Egypt and around it, and since a great part of the habituated land of the earth at that time was that area, this term has been used in an absolute form. This is also probable that the existence of Alif and Lam at the beginning of the word /'ard/ is for agreement and points to the land of Egypt.

However, in order to strengthen the bases of his cruel oppression, Pharaoh committed a number of crimes:

At first, Pharaoh tried to produce disunity among people. This was the same policy that had been forming the main foundation of the oppressors in the length of history. The dominion of a little minority over a great majority is often impossible save by the principle of: 'cast division and govern'.

They have always been afraid of 'the unity of the word' and 'the word of unity'. They terribly feared of the close relation of the rows of people with each other, and for this reason the only way of their protection is 'class government', the same thing that Pharaoh and the like have done in any age.

The verse continues saying:

"...and divided its people into sections..."

Yes, Pharaoh divided the people of Egypt into two separate groups: Coptic group and Sebtian group. Coptic ones were the native people of that land, and all the governmental positions, means of comfort, and castles and wealth were under their control.

Sebtians were the emigrant Children of Israel who were in the grips of Coptic ones as slaves, retainers, and handmaidens. Poverty and deprivation had fully surrounded them and they had to do the most labour-some works without enjoying any interest.

(The Arabic word /'ahl/ is used in the verse for this group, because the Children of Israel had lived for a long time in that land and they had verily become the people of it.)

When we hear that for building a grave such as the famous Pyramid called 'Khofo' and to be located close to the capital of Egypt, Cairo, the kings of Egypt make one hundred thousand slaves work during twenty years and thousands of them are killed in this event by means of lash or because of the pressure of working, we may guess the whole things.

His second crime was that he oppressed a group of the people of that land.

The verse says:

"...weakening a group of them, he slaughtered their sons and spared alive their females..."

Pharaoh had ordered his men to find the boys born among the Children of Israel and slay them and if the child was a girl they should keep her alive to become a slave maid.

What Did He Want to Do By This Action of His?

It is said that he had seen in his dream that a piece of fire came from Jerusalem and covered all the houses of Egypt. It burnt the houses of Coptic ones but the houses of the Children of Israel remained safe. He wanted the learned people and interpreters of dreams to explain his dream.

They said that there would come out a man from Jerusalem who might have the power of destruction of Egypt and the government of its kings.

It is also said that some of soothsayers told him that there would be born a boy among the Children of Israel who could destroy his government.[1]

At last, this event caused that Pharaoh decided to slay the new born boys of the Children of Israel.

This is also probable that the former Divine prophets had delivered the glad tidings of the advent of Moses (as) and his specialties, thus, the people of Pharaoh, being informed of this fact, were terrified and tried to stand against it.[2]

But the occurrence of the phrase:

"...he slaughtered their sons..."

next to the phrase:

"...weakening a group of them..."

points to another matter.

It implies that, in order to weaken the Children of Israel, the people of Pharaoh had designed this evil plan that they would annihilate the male generation of the Children of Israel who could stand against the people of Pharaoh and fight with them, and to keep their females alive in order that they could serve

them, because those girls and women alone had not the power of struggling against them.

Another clear evidence for this statement is Surah Mu'min (Qafir), No. 40, verse 25 which implies that the act of slaying boys and keeping girls alive continued even after the rising of Moses (as).

It says:

"So when he brought to them the truth from Us, they said: 'Slay the sons of those who believe with him and keep their women alive'; and the struggle of the unbelievers will only come to a state of perdition."

The phrase: 'keep their women alive' apparently indicates that they wanted to keep the girls and women alive either for that those females might serve them, or for their lusts, or both of them.

In the last sentence of this verse, as a conclusion and also for stating the reason, the Qur'an says:

"…verily he was of the mischief- makers."

Shortly speaking, the act of the people of Pharaoh was wholly making mischief in the land. His self-superiority was a mischief. Inventing a kind of life with class division in Egypt was another mischief. Torturing the Children of Israel, slaying their sons and using their daughters as slaves was their third mischief. In addition to these, there were many other corruptions in them, too.

It is natural that those who seek their self-superiority are only the protectors of their own interests; and protecting the personal interests never agrees with protecting the social interests, which needs justice, benevolence, and donation. Therefore, whatever it may be, its result is mischief in all dimensions of life.

By the way, the Arabic word /yu?abbihu/, derived from /?abaha/, shows that the behaviour of the people of Pharaoh with the Children of Israel in slaying them was like killing animals.

There have been cited many stories concerning this crime of the people of Pharaoh. Some of the commentators say that Pharaoh had ordered his men to take the pregnant women of the Children of Israel under an exact control, and only the Coptic midwives were allowed to be the mission of their child-birth; so that if the child was a boy they would immediately inform the Egyptian authorities about the event and they would come and take their prey.[3]

It is not exactly clear that how many of the babies of the Children of Israel were killed in this program. Some have said that its number was about ninety thousand, while some others said it was one hundred thousand.

They imagined that by these horrible crimes, they could hinder the rising of the Children of Israel and the certain accomplishment of the will of Allah.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verses 5-6

وَنُرِيدُ أَن نَّمُنَّ عَلَي الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا فِي الاَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ

وَنُمَكِّنَ لَهُمْ فِي الاَرْضِ وَنُرِيَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا يَحْذَرُونَ

5. "And We have intended to bestow (Our) favour upon those who were oppressed in the earth, and to make them leaders (in faith) and make them heirs."
6. "And to grant them power in the earth, and to show Pharaoh and Haman, and their hosts, what they were dreading from them."

The worldly government of the oppressed ones and also supporting them in the length of history is Allah's will. There is no doubt that when Allah's will is issued for a thing to occur, that thing will certainly be performed and no barrier can hinder it.

The holy Qur'an says:

"Verily when He intends a thing, His command is, 'Be', and it is!"[4]

So, in this verse, it says:

"And We have intended to bestow (Our) favour upon those who were oppressed in the earth, and to make them leaders (in faith) and make them heirs."

Then, in the next verse, it says:

"And to grant them power in the earth, and to show Pharaoh and Haman, and their hosts, what they were dreading from them."

How much these two verses are expressive and hope-giving! They are expressed in the form of Arabic present tense (which shows the continuation of action) and as a general law so that no one imagines that it belongs only to the oppressed ones of the Children of Israel and the government of Pharaoh.

The verse implies that Pharaoh intended to disperse the Children of Israel and destroy their power and greatness, but Allah (s.w.t.) intended them to become strong and victorious.

Pharaoh wanted that their power could be in the hand of the oppressors forever, but Allah (s.w.t.) intended to give the government to the oppressed ones, and finally it happened exactly the same.

By the way, the application of the Arabic word /minnat/, as we have formerly said, too, is in the sense of 'to bestow merits and bounties', and this usage is completely different from the verbal /minnat/ that we

reiterate a bounty in order to belittle the opposite party, which is certainly a blameworthy action.

In these two noble verses Allah (s.w.t.) has removed the curtain from His Will concerning the oppressed ones, and states five affairs in this ground which are closely connected to each other.

The first thing is that Allah intends to give them His bounties by saying:

"And We have intended to bestow (***Our***) ***favour..."***

Another thing is that Allah intends to make them leaders when He says:

"...and to make them leaders (***in faith***)***..."***

The third thing is that Allah intends to make them the heirs of the government of the oppressors, where He says:

"...and make them heirs."

The fourth is that Allah gives them a strong and lasting government:

"And to grant them power in the earth..."

The fifth is that Allah showed their enemies that which they were afraid of and they had mobilized all their forces against them:

"...and to show Pharaoh and Haman, and Their hosts, what they were dreading from them."

Such is Allah's favour and grace unto the oppressed ones. But who are the oppressed, and what qualities do they have? We will state about them later.

Haman was Pharaoh's famous minister, and he was so influenced in the court of Pharaoh that in the above verse the forces of Egypt are called the forces of Pharaoh and Haman.[5]

By the way, it was said that these verses do not speak about a private, local, and limited program related to the Children of Israel, but they are stating a general law for all centuries and the entire people and generations.

The first abovementioned verse says:

"And We have intended to bestow (***Our***) ***favour upon those who were oppressed in the earth, and to make them leaders*** (***in faith***) ***and make them heirs."***

This is a glad-tidings upon the field of triumph of the truth over the untruth and faith over disbelief.

This is a glad-tidings for all the free men who seek for the government of justice and wiping the

elements of injustice and cruelty.

An example of the outward existence of Allah's Will was the actual government of the Children of Israel and annihilation of the government of Pharaoh.

And a more complete example of it was the government of the Prophet of Islam (S) and his followers after the advent of Islam. It was the government of the faithful, poor, indigent and purified oppressed people who were always mocked and despised by the Pharaohs of their time and were under their pressure, injustice and cruelty.

At last, by the hand of this very group, Allah opened the gates of the castles of those kings and brought them down of the throne of power and humiliated the tyrants.

And a vaster example of it will be the advent of the government of Justice and Truth all over the world by Hadrat Mahdi (may our souls be sacrificed to him).

These verses are among the verses that clearly give the glad tidings of the advent of such a government. Some Islamic traditions indicate that, commenting on this verse, the Imams of Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) have pointed to this great advent.

We read in Nahj-ul-Balaqah from Ali (as) who said:

"The world will bend towards us after having been refractory as the biting she-camel bends towards its young."

Then Amir-ul-Mu'minin (as) recited the verse:

"And We have intended to bestow (Our) favour upon those who were oppressed in the earth, and to make them leaders (in faith) and make them heirs."[6]

Also the same Imam (as), commenting on the above verse, said:

"They are the progeny of Muhammad (S). Allah will raise their Mahdi after their trouble (and pressure they receive); then He will give them honour and make their enemies despised."[7]

Imam Zayn-ul-'Abidin, Ali-ibn-il-Husayn (as), once in a tradition said:

"By the One Who raised Muhammad (S) legitimately as the giver of glad tidings and warner, verily the righteous of us Ahl-ul-Bayt and their followers are like Moses and his followers. ... (Finally we will be victorious and they will be destroyed and the government of the truth and justice will be ours.)"[8]

Of course, the worldly government of Mahdi (as) at the end will never hinder the limited Islamic government to be formed before it by the oppressed ones against the oppressors. Then whenever they prepare its conditions the certain promise and Divine Will will be accomplished for them and they will

gain this victory.

Some Traditions Upon the Advent of Mahdi (as)

Fadl-ibn-Shathan narrates from Hassan-ibn-Mahbub, from Malik-ibn-'Atiyyih, from 'Abu-Hamzah Thabit-ibn-'Abi-Safiyyih Dinar, from Imam Baqir (as) who said:

"The night before 'Ashura Imam Husayn (as) delivered a great sermon for his companions and informed them that whoever was with him would become martyr and he (as) let them go out of that land and would rescue themselves if they desired. Some of them said earnestly that they might never separate from him.

Then he delivered a sermon again and said:

"I give you glad tidings of Paradise. By Allah, after we become martyr, we will remain (in the bounty of Allah) how long He desires. Then Allah will bring you and us out at the time of the advent of Our Qa'im. Then he will take vengeance from the oppressors. Then you and I will see them in chains, yokes, and kinds of punishment and tortures."

Some one asked:

"O son of the Prophet of Allah! Who is your Qa'im?"

He (as) said:

'He is the seventh son of my son, Muhammad-ibn-Ali, Al-Baqir, and he is Allah's proof, the son of Hassan-ibn-Ali-ibn-Muhammad-ibn-Ali-ibn-Musa-ibn-Ja'far-ibn-Muhammad-ibn-Ali my son, and he is the one who will be absent for a long time, then he will reappear and fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with tyranny and injustice."[9]

In this tradition Imam Husayn (as) has spoken about his return to this world as well as the martyrs of Karbala.

Shaykh Hurr 'Amili has narrated the last part of this tradition from the book entitled 'Ithbat-ur-Raj'ah, by Fadl-ibn-Shathan.[10]

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"The first person to whom the earth (grave) will cleave and he returns to the world is Husayn-ibn Ali (as)."[11]

Imam Baqir (as) said to Bukayr-ibn-'A'yun:

"Verily the Messenger of Allah (S) and Ali (as) will return (to this world)."[12]

Imam Husayn (as) said:

"I am the first person to whom the earth will cleave and I will come out of it and this is contemporary with the return of Amir-ul-Mu'minin and the raising up of our Qa'im."[13]

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"Accompany with Qa'im, there will come out twenty seven persons from behind Kufah, fifteen ones of them are from the people of Moses (as), those who used to guide (to the Truth) and called (people) to justice..."[14]

Imam Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as) said:

"I asked the Messenger of Allah:

'O' Messenger of Allah! Is Mahdi from us, the progeny of Muhammad, or from other than us?'

Then the Messenger of Allah said:

'But he is of us with whom Allah will end the religion as He began it with us, and by us people will be delivered from disturbances the same as they were delivered from polytheism; and by us they will be brethren after the sedition of the enemy as they became brethren after the enmity of polytheism."[15]

Abu Sa'id-il-Khudri narrates from the Prophet (S) that verily he said:

"At the time of Mahdi, my Ummah will be favoured a bounty the like of which they had never been favoured. The sky will gradually send (bounties) down on them and the earth will not restrain anything of its plants but it brings them out."[16]

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

"Mahdi (as) will come out while there will be a cloud above his head in which a caller will call: 'This is Mahdi, the viceroy of Allah; then do follow him'."[17]

By the way, the great learned Hasan-ibn-Solayman Al-Hilly has written a book upon the virtues of Ahl-ul-Bayt (as), in which he has recorded many narrations about Raj'at (returning to this world), and the Late 'Allamah Majlisi has stated around two hundred explicit traditions widely transmitted from the immaculate Imams and said:

"More than forty notables of Shi'ah, such as: Shaykh Tusi, Shaykh Mufid, Sayyid Murtada 'Alam-ul-Huda, Shaykh Saduq, Kulayni, and the like have referred them in their valuable works."

He says:

"If the traditions of Raj'at were not widely transmitted, there could not be any one to claim widely

transmitted of."

Also The Late Tabarsi in Majma'-ul-Bayan, when discussing Raj'at, says:

"It has been narrated widely transmitted from the Imams of Ahl-ul-Bayt that at the time of raising of Mahdi (as) Allah will cause some of his friends and followers to return to this world, who had formerly passed away, in order to help him and get the reward of his assistant and see his victorious government and become happy.

Allah will also bring back some of his enemies to be taken vengeance and be killed as punishment, and to be involved of being abject and contemptible by seeing Mahdi's glory and grandeur."[18]

For proving Raj'at, the Late Shaykh-i-Tusi, in his valuable commentary, Tibyan, has reasoned to many holy verses of the Qur'an, and then he has claimed that some of the traditions of Raj'at are widely transmitted.

The Late Shaykh Hurr 'Amily, by means of different statements, has also proved that the traditions of Raj'at are widely transmitted. There have been recorded five hundred and twenty traditions in the valuable book entitled "'Iqath" concerning Raj'at.[19]

Upon the explanation of Tahthib, the Late Muhaddith Jaza'iri has stated that he had seen six hundred and twenty traditions about Raj'at.[20]

However, the abovementioned matters have been taken from the book entitled: Raj'at-i-Daulat-i-Karimeh Khandan-i-Wahy, pp. 141, 142.

Who The Oppressed and Oppressors Are

We know that the Arabic term /mustad'af/ is derived from the word /da'f/ (weakness). But, here, it does not mean someone who is weak, unable, and not having power, it means someone who has powers both in actuality and potentiality but he has been under serious pressure from the side of the unjust and tyrants so that he is in weakness, chains, and yokes.

He always tries to break the chains in order to become free, and send the oppressors away so that he can establish the right religion and justice everywhere.

Allah has promised such a group that He will help them and give them the government of the earth. This promise is not for those shiftless and coward people who are not ready even to make a shout, let alone that they enter the field of struggle and be sacrificed.

That day, the Children of Israel could become the heirs of the government of Pharaohs, too, when they supported their leader, Moses (as), and mobilized their forces in a single row. They completed the remaining faith that they had inherited from their grand father Abraham (as) with the invitation of Moses

(as), and after wiping out superstitions from their thought, they became ready to raise.

Of course, there are various kinds of Mustad'af (oppressed). They are ideological, cultural, economical, ethical and political oppressed. That which the Qur'an has emphasized on more, are the political and ethical oppressed.

No doubt the arrogant tyrants, in order to strengthen the bases of their tyrannical policy, at first try to mentally and culturally weaken their preys and to economic weakness so that power and ability may not remain for them and they do not think about raising and taking the rein of government in their hand.

In five occurrences of the holy Qur'an the oppressed are referred to in which the words are about the believers who were under the pressure of the oppressors.

In one place, the Qur'an invites the believers to struggle in the way of Allah and helping the Faithful oppressed ones.

It says:

"And what has happened to you that you should not fight in the way of Allah and for the weak among men, women, and children who say: 'Our Lord! Take us out of this town whose people are oppressors, and appoint for us from You guardian, and appoint for us from You helper!'"[21]

Only in one instance the Qur'an speaks about the ones who are unjust and cooperate with disbelievers while they claim that they are oppressed but the Qur'an negates their claim, where it says:

"...'In what state were you?' They will reply: 'We were oppressed in the land'. (The angels) will say: 'Was not Allah's land vast so that you could have migrated therein?'..."

But since they did not so, their abide is Hell.[22]

Yet, the Qur'an has, however, supported the oppressed everywhere and has mentioned them fairly and has considered them the under-pressure-believers who are strugglers and are in the grace of Allah.

The General Style of All Oppressors

It was not only Pharaoh who, for the captivity of the Children of Israel, slaughtered their men and kept their women alive to be as maid servants, but all the tyrants of history used to do like that and caused the active powers to be useless by any mean they could.

Wherever they could not break the men, they broke their manliness. They stopped the spirit of bravery, courage and faith in them by spreading means of corruption, narcotic materials, expansion of indecency, sexual libertinage, the development of liquor and gambling, and kinds of unsafe amusement so that they could continue their self-interest government with peace of mind.

But the Divine prophets, specially the Prophet of Islam (S), tried to awaken the inactive powers of the young persons; and even taught manliness to women and set them in the row of men against the oppressors.

The evidences of these two programs are so manifest in the history of the past, and nowadays in all Islamic countries, that there is no need of mentioning them.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 7

وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَي أُمِّ مُوسَي أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ فَإِذَا خِفْتِ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَلاَ تَخَافِي وَلاَ تَحْزَنِي إِنَّا رَآدُّوهُ إِلَيْكِ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

7. "And We inspired unto the mother of Moses, saying: 'Give him suck, then when you fear for him, cast him into the River and do not fear nor grieve, for We will return him unto you and make him one of the apostles'."

Pharaoh had been told that in that year a child would be born that if he could grow up he might destroy him. He ordered that all the newborn children should be killed. But when Moses was born, Allah inspired his mother to give him suck.

Then she should put him inside a box and cast the box into the sea. In this noble verse, there are two orders, two prohibitions, and two glad tidings unto Moses' mother.

The two orders are:

"***Give him suck***"

and

"***Cast him into the River***".

The two prohibitions are:

"***Do not fear***"
"***Nor grieve***".

And the two glad tidings are:

"***We will return him unto you***"

and

"***Make him one of the apostles***".

The Arabic word /xauf/ (fear) is used for a probable danger, and the Qur'anic word ***/huzn/*** is applied for a certain anxiety.[23] The objective of the term /yamm/ is the Nile River in Egypt which is called 'sea' because of its greatness and largeness. The castle of Pharaoh had been built on its bank.

When Allah desires it, man's enemy becomes his refuge, either:

"Then the people of Pharaoh picked him up (from the River)."[24]

Therefore, in order to illustrate a lively example of the triumphant of the oppressed over the oppressors, in this verse Allah starts the story of Moses and Pharaoh. It specially explains the parts in which Moses is in the weakest states and Pharaoh is in his mightiest circumstances, so that it shows the triumph of the Will of Allah over the will of tyrants in its best form.

It says:

"And We inspired unto the mother of Moses, saying: 'Give him suck, then when you fear for him, cast him into the River and do not fear nor grieve, for We will return him unto you and make him one of the apostles'."

This short holy verse contains two commandments, two prohibitions, and two glad tidings which are a summary of a great story full of adventures, the extract of it is as follows:

The system of Pharaoh had designed a vast plan for killing the 'new born boys' of the Children of Israel, and even the midwives of Pharaoh were taking control over the pregnant women of the Children of Israel.

In this course, one of the midwives had friendship with Moses' mother. (The delivery of Moses performed secretly and the signs of pregnancy were not so apparent in his mother.) When she felt that the childbirth was approaching, she went to meet her friend, the midwife. She told her that she had a child in her womb and she was in need of her kindness and friendship.

When Moses was born, a mysterious light came out from his eyes, in a manner that the midwife's body trembled, and she felt a light of love in the depth of her heart for him, so that it brightened all parts of her heart.

The midwife turned to the mother of Moses and said:

"I had decided to inform the birth of this child to the government in order that the officials come and kill this boy (and I take my tip), but what can I do that I feel an intensive love from this child inside my heart, so that I do not wish that he receives even the slightest harm. Take care of him properly. I think that at last our final enemy is this child."

When the midwife came out from the house of Moses' mother, some of the spies of the government saw

her and decided to enter the house. Moses' sister informed the event to the mother and she became so hasty that she did not know what to do.

In the midst of this intensive fear that she could not think at all, she wrapped the child in a piece of cloth and threw him into the oven. Then the men of government came in and, after searching everywhere, they found nothing there save an oven full of fire.

They began making investigations from the mother of Moses. They asked what that midwife was doing there. She answered them that she was her friend and had come to see her. The spies became disappointed and went out.

Moses' mother came to her senses and asked Moses' sister where Moses was. She answered she did not know. Suddenly a cry was heard from the inside of the oven. The mother hasted toward the oven when she saw Allah had made the fire cold and safe for him, (the same Lord Who made the fire of Numrud cold and safe for Abraham). She took out her child safe and sound from the oven.

Still the mother was not in security because the officials were searching here and there and, hearing the sound of a body would be enough for a great danger to happen.

Now a Divine inspiration enlightened the heart of Moses's mother. It was an inspiration that apparently invited her to a dangerous action, but, however, she felt peace from it.

She realized that it was a Divine mission that she should fulfil it in any case. She decided to accomplish the content of this inspiration and cast her newborn child into the Nile River.

She went to an Egyptian carpenter, (a carpenter who was one of Coptic people). She asked him to make a small box for her. The carpenter asked her for what purpose she wanted that box with those qualities.

The mother of Moses, being unable to tell a lie, disclosed her plan to the carpenter and said that she was from the Children of Israel and she needed the box for her newborn son to hide him in it.

The carpenter intended to inform the event to the cruel informers. When he went to them he became dumb because of the horror he felt in his heart. He wanted to communicate the matter to the informers by only making signs, but they took his deeds as a mockery and, beating him, drove him away.

When the carpenter came out he found himself to be all right. He went again to the informers and the previous event happened to him once more. Then he was convinced that there was a Divine secret in it, and he made the box for Moses' mother and gave it to her.

Perhaps it was in the early morning, when the people of Egypt were still asleep, that the mother of Moses brought her baby with the box beside the Nile River. She sucked him for the last time, and then she put him in that special box and let it move on the water like a ship.

Soon the waves of the River took the box far from the bank. The mother was standing there, watching the scene. In a short moment she felt that as if her heart was separated from her and was moving on the waves. Had not the grace of Allah made her heart calm, she would have cried and every thing was disclosed!

Now, we may see what happened in the palace of Pharaoh as stated in the news. The only child Pharaoh had was a young daughter. She was suffering from a serious sickness. He wanted the physicians to cure her, but he got no result from them. He betook to the soothsayers.

They said:

"O Pharaoh! We have foresighted that from the inside of this sea there will come a human into this castle that if the body of this patient be rubbed with his saliva, she will be cured."

Pharaoh and his wife, 'Asiyah, were waiting for such an event. One day suddenly a box, which was moving on the waves of the River, attracted their attention. He ordered his men to go immediately toward the box and take it and bring it to him to see what was inside it.

The mysterious box was put in front of Pharaoh. Those who were around him could not open it. Yes, the box of the safety of Moses should be opened by the hand of Pharaoh himself, and so it happened.

When the eyes of Pharaoh's wife were faced with the eyes of the baby, a light brightened the depths of her hearts and all those who were there, and Pharaoh's wife in particular, heartily loved him; and when the saliva of this newborn baby caused the sick person to be cured, this love was increased.[25]

The rest of this story is shortly explained by the Holy Qur'an, which we refer to in the following pages.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 8

فَالْتَقَطَهُ ءَالُ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوّاً وَحَزَناً إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا خَاطِئِينَ

8. "Then the people of Pharaoh picked him up** (**from the River**) **that he might be unto them an enemy and a** (**cause of their**) **grief; verily Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts were sinners."

When anxieties and difficulties often rush, Allah is the best guide and support for the believers.

In the way of performing the commandments of Allah we must neither afraid of anything nor be anxious of any problem.

The Qur'an says:

"Then the people of Pharaoh picked him up** (**from the River**) **that he might be unto them an

enemy and a* (*cause of their*) *grief...”

The Qur’anic word ***/’altaqata/*** is derived from the word /’iltiqat/ which originally means: ‘reaching to something without any effort and endeavour’. And it is also for this reason that the lost things that one finds, in Arabic, are called /luqatah/.

It is evident that the men of Pharaoh did not take the box of this baby from the waves of the river with the purpose that they would foster their enemy in their own lap, but as the Pharaoh’s wife said, they wanted to take ‘a refreshment of eye’ for themselves, but finally it became as it happened.

The delicacy of this meaning is in this very fact that Allah intends to show His power that how He made this group, who had mobilized all their forces to kill the boys of the Children of Israel, to take care of and foster eagerly the some one for whom they applied all those cruelties in order that they could vanish him.

However, the Arabic phrase: /’alu fir‘aun/ (the people of Pharaoh), used in the verse, shows that not only one person but a group of the people of Pharaoh participated in taking the box from the water, and this is an evidence for the fact that they were waiting for such a thing.

At the end of the verse, the Qur’an adds:

“...verily Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts were sinners.”

They were sinners in every thing. What a sin is greater than this that they had left out the path of truth and justice, and founded the foundation of their government on vice, injustice, tyranny, and polytheism. And what a sin is clearer than this that they killed thousands of children to destroy Moses, but Allah put him in their own hands to take him, foster him and bring up their own enemy.

Raqib in Mufradat says:

“There is a difference between the Arabic words /xati/ and /muxti/. The term /xati/ is used for the one who begins a job that he can not afford doing it and goes a wrong way, while the term /muxti/ is used for a person who begins a job that he can afford it very well, but it happens that he makes mistake and wastes it.”

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 9

وَقَالَتِ امْرَأَةُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرَّتُ عَيْنٍ لِّي وَلَكَ لاَ تَقْتُلُوهُ عَسَي أَن يَنفَعَنَآ أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَداً وَهُمْ لاَ يَشْعُرُونَ

9. “And Pharaoh’s wife said: ‘*(*He will be*) *a joy of the eye for me and for you; do not slay him; may be he will profit us, or we may take him for a son; but they did not perceive* (*what they were doing*)*.”

The women have an effective function in social affairs. (Pharaoh's wife changed the decision of Pharaoh and neither of his dignity, sovereignty, and wealth could hinder her.)

In Moses' life, a few women had an important fundamental function. They were Moses' mother, Moses' sister, Pharaoh's wife and the wife of Moses. In this verse, the function of the wife of Pharaoh in preventing him from killing Moses is stated.

The verse says:

"And Pharaoh's wife said: '(He will be) a joy of the eye for me and for you; do not slay him; may be he will profit us, or we may take him for a son..."

It seems that by the face of the baby and other signs, including putting him in the box and leaving him on the waves of Nile, Pharaoh had found out that this baby belonged to the Children of Israel.

Suddenly the thought of raising up of a man from the Children of Israel and the destruction of his kingdom by his hand came into his mind and he wanted that his criminal law upon the new-born children of the Children of Israel should be executed for this baby, too.

The flatterers around Pharaoh also encouraged this kind of thought and said that there was no reason that the law might not be executed upon him.

But 'Asiyah, Pharaoh's wife, who had no son and her pure heart, which was not of the kind of that of the people of Pharaoh's court, had been the center of the love of this new-born boy, stood against all of them, and since in these kinds of family debates women often win, she became victorious there, too.

And if the event of the Pharaoh's daughter, who was cured before them, is also added to it, the triumph of 'Asiyah in this conflict will be made more clear.

But, at the end of the verse, the Holy Qur'an, in a short expressive sentence, says:

"...but they did not perceive (what they were doing)."

Yes, they did not know that the Divine operative command and the invincible Will of Allah (s.w.t.) was upon this fact that this baby should be grown up in the most important center of danger and no one had the ability and power of opposing with this Divine Will.

Yes, the providence and power of the Almighty is not only in that if He wishes to destroy a powerful and tyrannical people He sends the forces of heaven and the earth for their destruction.

Showing power is in that He appoints the arrogant tyrants themselves as the destructive of them, and influences in their hearts and thoughts so effectively that they eagerly gather the fuel-wood by the fire of which they must be burnt; or they build a prison wherein they must die; or they set up a gallows-tree on which they must be put to death.

The state of the arrogant powerful people of Pharaoh was also as this, and Moses' fosterage and deliverance, in all stages, were done by their own hand:

Moses' midwife was a Coptic woman.

The maker of the deliverance box of Moses was a Coptic carpenter.

Those who took the box from the waves of Nile were among 'The people of Pharaoh'.

The person who could open the door of the box was Pharaoh himself or his wife, 'Asiyah'.

And, finally, the secure, peaceful, and educational place of Moses, who became brave and Pharaoh-breaker was that very palace of Pharaoh! And this is the providence.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verses 10-11

وَأَصْبَحَ فُؤَادُ أُمِّ مُوسَي فَارِغاً إِن كَادَتْ لَتُبْدِي بِهِ لَوْلاَ أَن رَّبَطْنَا عَلَي قَلْبِهَا لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

وَقَالَتْ لِأُخْتِهِ قُصِّيهِ فَبَصُرَتْ بِهِ عَن جُنُبٍ وَهُمْ لاَ يَشْعُرُونَ

10. "And the heart of the mother of Moses became void; she was about to disclose it had We not strengthened her heart so that she might be of the believers (in Our promises)."
11. "And she said to the sister of (Moses): 'Follow him.' So she watched him from afar while they did not perceive."

The peace of hearts is in the authority of Allah (s.w.t.).

The important thing before Allah is Faith, and in this field, men and women are equal for Him. And the peace of mind and rest of heart are among the signs of Faith.

Moses' mother sent her child on the waves of Nile, but after this event there appeared an intensive fear in her heart. The vacant place of her newborn baby, which had filled her heart, was completely sensible.

It was almost nigh for her to shout and cast out the secrets hidden in her heart.

It was nigh that she might cry and moan for the separation of her son.

But the grace of Allah (s.w.t.) was showered over her and the heart of Moses' mother was empty of everything except the remembrance of her son; and if Allah had not strengthened her heart by the light of Faith and hope, she might have disclosed the matter.

The verse says:

“And the heart of the mother of Moses became void; she was about to disclose it had We not strengthened her heart so that she might be of the believers (***in Our promises***)***.”***

The Arabic word /Fariq/ means ‘empty’, and here the purpose of it is that it became void from all things save the remembrance of Moses. Some commentators have taken it with the sense of being empty from sorrow and grief; or empty from inspiration and the glad tidings that she was already given; but regarding the sentence of the holy verse, these commentaries do not seem correct.

This is completely natural that a mother, who separates her child from herself in the abovementioned manner, forgets everything but her child and goes into such a mood that, without considering the dangers that may threaten both her and her child, cries and reveals the secrets hidden in her heart.

But the Lord, Who has assigned this heavy mission for this kind and compassionate mother, strengthens her heart so firmly that she believes in the Divine promises and knows that her child is in the protection of Allah and, at last, He will return him to her and he will become a prophet.

The Arabic word /rabatna/ is derived from /rabata/ which originally means: ‘to tie an animal, or the like, somewhere to be assured that it is secure in its place’.

That is why the site of this kind of animals is called ‘Ribat’, and afterward it has been used in a vaster scope of meaning, as: ‘to guard, to strengthen, and to get firmness’; and the purpose of /rabatna ‘ala qalbiha/ in this verse is ‘strengthening the heart of this mother’, so that she believes in the Divine inspiration and tolerates this great event.

The next verse implies that Moses’ mother regained her calmness as the result of Allah’s grace, but she wanted to know the circumstance of her child.

Therefore, the verse says:

“And she said to the sister of (***Moses***)***: ‘Follow him.’...”***

The Qur’anic term ***/qussiyuhu/*** is derived from /qass/ which means ‘seeking for the traces of something’. The Arabic word /qissih/ is used in the sense of ‘story’ because it follows the different news and events.

Moses’ sister fulfilled the command of the mother and watched the affairs from a considerable distance.

The verse continues saying:

“...So she watched him from afar while they did not perceive.”

Some commentators have said that several special servants of Pharaoh had brought the child out of the castle in order to search for a nurse for him, and it was just this time that Moses’ sister saw her brother from a distance.

But the first commentary seems more fitting.

Thus, after that when the mother of Moses returned to her own home, Moses' sister was in the bank of Nile, watching the events from afar, and by her own eyes she saw the manner how some of the people of Pharaoh took him off the water and rescued him from the horrible danger which was threatening him.

There have also been delivered some other commentaries for the Qur'anic sentence***: /hum la yaš'urun/*** (***they did not perceive***)***.***

The Late Tabarsi, particularly, believes that the repetition of this sentence in the previous verses and here about Pharaoh may point to this fact that he who was so abundantly unaware of the affairs, how did he claim divinity? How did he want to fight against the Will of Allah?

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 12

وَحَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَرَاضِعَ مِن قَبْلُ فَقَالَتْ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَي أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ يَكْفُلُونَهُ لَكُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُ نَاصِحُونَ

12. "And We already forbade on him all foster mothers ere until (***his sister came up and***) ***said: 'Shall I guide you unto the people of a house who will take care of him for you and they will be benevolent to him?'"***

The Arabic term /maradi'/ is the plural form of /murdi'/ that means 'the woman who gives suck at the breast', and 'wet-nurse'.

If Allah does not wish something, a large system such as that of Pharaoh is impotent to supply it as the food of a baby, either.

The most elementary things, such as sucking milk of a sucking child is also done by Allah's Will, and if He does not desire, it will not happen:

(***And We already forbade***)***.***

When an arrogant person was discouraged, he might easily accept the guidance and suggestion of even an unknown fellow, too.

However, the will of Allah was that this child would return to his mother soon and make her heart calm.

So, the verse says:

"And We already forbade on him all foster mothers ere..."

It is natural that, after a few hours, a newborn child, such as Moses, becomes hungry and cries impatiently. They had to search a foster mother for him, in particular that the queen of Egypt had bent

her heart upon him and loved him very much.

The men of Pharaoh began searching everywhere to find a foster mother for the child, but it was surprising that he did not suck milk from any foster mother.

Perhaps the child was frightened by their features, or the flavor of their milk was not acquainted with his taste, and it was unpleasant to him. As if he wanted to throw off himself from the bosom of those foster mothers. This was that very divine genetic prohibition that He had forbidden all foster mothers on him.

Every moment, the child became hungrier and more impatient. He was ceaselessly crying and his sound was heard in the castle and caused the queen's heart to tremble.

The officials intensified their efforts. Suddenly they met in a not so distanced place a girl who said that she knew a family who could take care of that newborn child and they would be benevolent to him.

The verse continues saying:

"…until** (**his sister came up and**) **said: 'Shall I guide you unto the people of a house who will take care of him for you and they will be benevolent to him?'"

She implied that she knew a woman from the Children of Israel whose chest was full of milk and she had a heart full of affection. She had lost her child and was ready to undertake giving suck to the baby of the castle.

The officials become happy and took the mother of Moses to Pharaoh's castle. When the child smelt the mother's smell, he eagerly pressed her nipple in his mouth and he got a new life from her milk.

The light of joy was seen in the eyes of the audience, specially those officials who, after a tiresome research, had gained their aim and were happier than others. Pharaoh's wife could not hide her happiness from others for this event.

Perhaps they told the foster where she was that they sought everywhere for her. They wished she had come sooner. They admired her and also her milk which was a resolver of their difficulty.

Some Islamic narrations indicate that when Moses accepted the nipple of the mother, Haman, the minister of Pharaoh, said:

"I think you are the real mother of this child. Why did he accept only your breast from among those many women?"

She said:

"O king! It is because I am a sweet-smelling woman and my milk is also very sweet. Up to now there has been no child given to me but he (she) *has accepted my nipple."*

The audience verified her words and each of them gave her a precious present.26

Imam Baqir (as) in a tradition said:

*"It did not last longer than three days that Allah returned the baby to his mother.*27

Some have said that this Divine genetic prohibition of the milk of others for Moses was that Allah did want that this great prophet drink the milk which was polluted with unlawful food, polluted with properties gained by larceny, crime, bribery, and usurping other's rights.

He should drink a pure milk such as the milk of his mother so that he could stand against the pollutions and fight against the impious ones.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 13

فَرَدَدْنَاهُ إِلَي أُمّـِهِ كَيْ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلاَ تَحْزَنَ وَلِتَعْلَمَ أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ

13. "Thus did We restore him to his mother that her eye might be refreshed, and that she might not grieve, and that she might know that the promise of Allah is true, but most of them do not know."

Never do the Divine promises fail, but the majority of people are those who see only the surface of the things and have no understanding of the wise secrets and devise plans of Allah. Of course, for the people of Truth the aims are important, not the titles.

Finally, the child was returned to the bosom of the mother, though this time the mother was employed as a foster mother. But the title is no important, the return of the child was important.

Therefore, this verse says:

"Thus did We restore him to his mother that her eye might be refreshed, and that she might not grieve, and that she might know that the promise of Allah is true, but most of them do not know."

There arises a question here: Did the people of Pharaoh give the child to the mother to suck him and during this time, every day, or now and then, she had to bring the child into the castle of Pharaoh in order that the Queen of Egypt might have a new visit from him? Or did they keep the child inside the court and Moses' mother came there in special times and sucked him?

There is not any clear evidence for either of these two probabilities, but the first one seems more fitting.

And also, was Moses transported to the castle of Pharaoh after the end of his sucking period? Or did he usually keep his relation with the mother and his family and used to have familiar intercourse between

these two?

Some commentators have said that after the sucking period she gave him to Pharaoh and his wife, ’Asiyah, and Moses was fostered by them and in their hands.

Here there are cited some other stories about the childish but expressive acts of Moses unto Pharaoh that mentioning all of them takes a long space.

But this sentence that, after that Moses was appointed to prophethood, Pharaoh told him:

“…‘Did we not cherish you as a child among us, and you tarried among us for** (**many**) **years of your life?”,

shows that Moses had lived in the castle of Pharaoh for a length of time and had remained there for some years.

It is understood from the commentary of Ali–ibn–’Ibrahim that Moses remained in the castle of Pharaoh with utmost honour until the period of his puberty, but his theistic statements made Pharaoh very inconvenient, so much so that he decided to kill Moses.

Moses left the castle and entered the city where he confronted the conflict of two men: one from the Coptic people and the other was from among the Children of Israel.[28]

1. Majma‘–ul–Bayan, Vol. 7, P. 239, and Fakhr–i–Razi, in Tafsir–i–Kabir, following the verse.
2. Tafsir–i–Fakhr–i–Razi, following the verse
3. Tafsir–i–Kabir–i–Fakhr–i–Razi, following the verse
4. Surah Yasin, No. 36, verse 82
5. More explanation about Haman, Allah willing, will be given in the commentary of verse 38 in the current Surah.
6. Nahj–ul–Balaqah, saying No. 209
7. Qiybat by Shaykh Saduq, according to Nur–uth–Thaqalayn, Vol. 3, P. 110
8. Majma‘–ul–Bayan, following the verse
9. Mokhtasar ’Ithbat–ur–Raj‘ah, seventh tradition; and Kifayat–ul–Mahdi, P. 50
10. ’Ithbat–ul–Hudat, Vol. 3, P. 569
11. Mizan–ul–Hikmah, Vol. 4, P. 1982
12. Ibid
13. Ibid
14. Ibid
15. ‘Iqd–ul–Durar, P. 142
16. ‘Iqd–ul–Durar, P. 169
17. Kashf–ul–Qummah, Vol. 2, P. 485
18. Majma‘ul–Bayan, Vol. 7, P. 234; and Tafsir–us–Safi, Vol. 4, P. 76
19. Kitab–ul–’Iqaz, P. 31 and P. 430
20. Bayan–ul–Furqan, Vol. 5, P. 288
21. Surah An–Nisa’, No. 4, verse 75
22. Ibid, verse 97
23. The Commentary of Al–Mizan

24. The current Surah, verse 8

25. This part of the narration is said by Ibn-'Abbas, recorded in the commentary of Fakhr-i-Razi, and there or also other narrations recorded in the commentary of 'Abul-Futuh and Majma'-ul-Bayan.

26. The Commentary by Fakhr-i-Razi, Vol. 221, P. 231

27. Tafsir-us-Safi, Vol. 3 under verse 40 from Surah Ta-Ha

28. The Commentary of Ali-Ibn-'Ibrahim, according to Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 117

Section 2: Moses Saved By Allah From Being Murdered

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 14

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَاسْتَوَي ءَاتَيْنَاهُ حُكْماً وَعِلْماً وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

14. "And when he reached his full strength and was ripe, We granted him wisdom and knowledge; and thus do We reward the good-doers."

The first condition of accepting responsibility is bodily puberty; but real puberty is not obtained by only the bodily growth and sexual power, it depends on the completion of thought and intellect, too.

Here we are faced with the third part of the adventurous life story of Moses (as), in which the events of before his puberty period, and before he goes from Egypt to Madyan, and the motive of his migration are pointed out.

It says:

"And when he reached his full strength and was ripe, We granted him wisdom and knowledge; and thus do We reward the good-doers."

The Arabic term /'ašudda/ is derived from /šiddat/ in the sense of 'to become strong'; and the word /'istawa/ is derived from /'istiwa'/ which means 'the perfection of creation and equilibrium'.

Some commentators have said that /balaqa 'ašudd/ is the state in which man reaches the limit of perfection from the point of bodily strength and it is often in the age of eighteen; and /'istiwa'/ is the state of equilibrium and establishment in the affair of life and living which usually comes forth after the perfection of bodily power.

The difference between these two Arabic words /hukm/ (judgment) and /'ilm/ (knowledge) may be in the

fact that /hukm/ refers to intellect, understanding, and ability for correct judgment, while /‘ilm/ is an awareness and knowledge which is not accompanied with ignorance.

The Qur’an sentence /ka￿alika najzil mu’minin/ clearly shows that, because of his godly piety and for his good and pure deeds, Moses had got this eligibility that Allah gave him the reward of wisdom and knowledge, and it is clear that the purpose of this wisdom and knowledge is not revelation and prophethood, because on that day Moses had a long distance with the time of revelation and prophethood.

Then, the purpose is that awareness, clear sightedness, the ability of correct judgment and the like of them that Allah gave to Moses for his chastity, veracity, and righteousness.

Shortly speaking, this sentence indicates that Moses did not change to the habit of the castle, the environment where he lived, and, as far as he could, he tried to help the right and justice, though today the details of it are not clear to us.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 15

وَدَخَلَ الْمَدِينَةَ عَلَي حِينِ غَفْلَةٍ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا فَوَجَدَ فِيهَا رَجُلَيْنِ يَقْتَتِلاَنِ هَذَا مِن شِيعَتِهِ وَهَذَا مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ فَاسْتَغَاثَهُ الَّذِي مِن شِيعَتِهِ عَلَي الَّذِي مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ فَوَكَزَهُ مُوسَي فَقَضَي عَلَيْهِ قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ مُضِلٌّ مُبِينٌ

15. “And he entered the city at a time when its people were unheeding, and found there two men fighting, one being of his own party, and the other of his enemies. Then the one that was of his own party sought his help against the one who was of his enemies, so Moses struck him with his fist and killed him. He said: ‘This is of the Satan’s doing; verily, he is an enemy that manifestly misleads’.”

The reformers of the society should sometimes informally, unknowingly and without any title come among people.

Before his prophethood, Moses (as) had some companions and followers, too. Though he was grown up in the castle of Pharaoh, the oppressed people had mostly accepted him as their supporter and leader because of his thought and manner.

However, the verse says:

“And he entered the city at a time when its people were unheeding…”

It is not clear that which city it was that Moses entered, but most probably it was the capital of Egypt. As some Islamic commentators have said, Moses had been condemned to be banished from the capital of Egypt as the result of the daily increasing discords he had against Pharaoh and his governmental

system. But, in a special time when people were unaware, Moses entered the capital.

This is also probable that the purpose of entering the city was his coming out from the castle of Pharaoh, because the castle of the kings were usually built by the city so that they could control the ways of coming and going.

The objective of the sentence 'at a time when its people were unheeding' is the time when the people of the city stopped their business and no one was exactly taking care of the circumstances of the city. But at what hour it happened?

In a tradition the holy Prophet (S) said:

"The hour of negligence is between sunset and the evening supper."[1]

And, verily, this hour is the hour of negligence and many of the crimes, vices, and ethical deviations are performed in these very hours of the beginning of night.

At this time, people are mostly neither busy working nor are they in the state of sleeping and resting. There is usually a general negligence in the city at this time, and the circulation of the mischief centers are also during these hours.

Anyhow, Moses entered the city where he was confronted a scene.

The verse continues saying:

"...and found there two men fighting, one being of his own party, and the other of his enemies..."

The application of the Arabic term /ši'atihi/ in the verse shows that from that time Moses had some communications with the children of Israel and he had some followers there, and probably he had chosen them as a central source for struggling against the tyrannical system of Pharaoh.

When the Israelite man saw Moses who was a strong man, asked him, to help him against his enemy.

The verse says:

"...Then the one that was of his own party sought his help against the one who was of his enemies..."

Moses hastened to help him in order to deliver him from the grips of that unjust cruel man. Some commentators have said that this enemy was one of the cooks of Pharaoh and he wanted to force the Israelite man to carry the woods without pay.

The verse says:

"...so Moses struck him with his fist and killed him..."

No doubt Moses did not want to kill the Coptic man, and this meaning is also understood from the later verses, not for the sake that they were not deserving to be killed, but for the sequels that this action might have for Moses and the Children of Israel.

So immediately Moses spoke:

"...He said: 'This is of the Satan's doing; verily, he is an enemy that manifestly misleads'."

In other words, he wanted to separate the hand of the Coptic man from the collar of the man who was from the Children of Israel. Though the people of Pharaoh deserved more than this, in those circumstances that action was not expediential and, as we will see later, this event caused him not to remain in Egypt any longer and he went toward Madyan.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 16

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي فَاغْفِرْ لِي فَغَفَرَ لَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

16. "(Moses) said: 'My Lord! Verily I have done harm to myself! Do You then forgive me!' So (Allah) forgave him. Verily He is the forgiving, the Merciful."

The righteous people immediately ask forgiveness even for the unintentional wrong actions, too, and avoid from their sequels. (By his seeking forgiveness, Moses asked several things from Allah: both wiping the social effects of his action, and removing the anxiety from the future, and repellence of the revengeful plots of the people of Pharaoh.)

In this verse, the Holy Qur'an from the tongue of Moses (as) says:

"(Moses) said: 'My Lord! Verily I have done harm to myself! Do You then forgive me!' So (Allah) forgave him. Verily He is the forgiving, the Merciful."

Certainly Moses did not commit any sin here, but there happened a 'leaving the better (nodbi)' from him that there should not happen such a thing so that he would not inflict some annoyance, trouble, and pain.

For this very action he asked Allah to forgive him and Allah included him in His grace, too. Commentators have delivered a great deal of discussions about the affray of the Coptic man and the Israelite one, and the Coptic being killed by Moses (as).

Of course this action was not itself an important problem, because the criminal men of Pharaoh were some cruel mischief mongers who cut the head of thousands of newborn sons from the Children of Israel and refused to commit no crime against the Children of Israel. Thus they were not some ones whose

blood could be honourable specially for the Children of Israel.

The things that have created difficulty for the commentators are the expressions that Moses (as) himself has stated in this event:

Once he says:

"...This is of the Satan's doing..."[2]

In another occurrence he says:

"My Lord! Verily I have done harm to myself! Do you then forgive me!'..."[3]

How do these expressions agree with the infallibility of the prophets who must have the rank of immunity even before their prophethood and Messengership?

But the above explanations upon the commentary of the above verses make clear that what Moses did was not more than leaving the better (nodbi).

By this act he troubled him because a Coptic being killed by Moses was not an ordinary thing that the people of Pharaoh could easily renounce, and we know that abandoning this action is in the sense of an action which is not essentially unlawful (haram), but it causes that a better deed may be left without that a wrong action would have been done.

Something similar to this meaning has also been cited in the life story of some other prophets, including Hadrat Adam, the explanation of which was given when commenting on Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 19.

A tradition upon the commentary of this verse has been recorded in 'Uyun-ul-'Akhbar from Imam Ali-ibn-Musar-Rida (as) who said:

"The purpose of the Qur'anic sentence:

"...this is of the Satan's doing..."

is the conflict of those two with each other which was considered as a Satanic act, not the act of Moses (as); and the purpose of the sentence:

"My Lord! Verily I have done harm to myself!..."

is that I put myself in a place where I should not put. I should not come into this city; and the purpose of the phrase:

"...Do You then forgive me!..."

is that You do cover me from Your enemies so that they do not find me.

(One of the meanings of /qufran/ is 'to cover'.)

Sayyid Murtada 'Alam-al-Huda, in Tanzih-ul-'Anbiya, commenting on the verse, has chosen the same meaning, too.4

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 17

قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَآ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ فَلَنْ أَكُونَ ظَهِيراً لِّلْمُجْرِمِينَ

17. "He said: "My Lord! For the bounty You have bestowed on me, never shall I be a supporter of the guilty'."

It is better that we call Allah in our supplications by the holy word 'Rabb' (Lord).

The bodily power is one of the bounties of Allah (s.w.t.) given to human beings. (Moses (as) had ability that he could kill a pagan by his fist.)

Moses implicitly said to Allah:

"For the gratitude of this bounty that You included me in Your forgiveness and caused me not to be seized by the enemies, and for the gratitude of all bounties that You have bestowed on me since the beginning, I will never support the guilty and will not be the helper of the unjust. On the contrary, I will hasten to help the oppressed and the deprived."

The verse says:

"He said: "My Lord! For the bounty You have bestowed on me, never shall I be a supporter of the guilty'."

The purpose of Moses (as) from this noble sentence was that he would never cooperate with the criminal sinful people of Pharaoh and he (as) would be the supporter of the oppressed Children of Israel.

In Islamic jurisprudence there is a large chapter about 'helping the sin' and 'assisting the oppressors'; or there are many traditions which show that one of the most clear sins is helping the unjust, tyrants, and criminals. It causes man to share the evil fate of theirs.

In principle, the unjust, tyrants, and persons like Pharaoh are some particular members who always exist in every society, and if the crowds of people do not cooperate with them the tyrannical kings will not become so tyrant.

When a group of vile and weak fellows, or the seekers of an occasion and mammonists gather around them and become as their aids or, at least, as their multitude of soldiers, they usually provide a satanic

power for them.

This Islamic and humane principle has repeatedly been emphasized on in the Holy Qur'an.

For example, Allah in Surah Al-Ma'idah, No. 5, verse 2 says:

"...And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and transgression...".

There are some other evidences in it, too.

The Qur'an explicitly says:

"And do not incline to those who are unjust, lest the Fire will touch you..."5

The Qur'anic word ***/rukun/***, whether it may be meant in the sense of heartily inclination, outward cooperation, or expressing content, or friendship and benevolence, or obedience on which each of commentators have delivered a commentary, or a concept that envelops all of them and it is reliance, confidence and dependence, is a lively evidence and attestation to our purpose.

Muhammad-ibn-Muslim Zuhari was a learned man who had cooperation not only with the system of Umayyads but also with Husham-ibn-'Abdul-Malik in particular.

Imam Zayn-ul-'Abidin Ali-ibn-il-Husayn (as), after avoiding him of helping the unjust, in his shaking words told him:

"Did they not invite you to their own group and did they not form a center by you that the mill of their oppression turns around its axis? Did they not set you as a bridge for their passing unto their afflictions, as a ladder for their aberrations, an emissary for their misguidance, and a follower for their shameful path?

*They create doubt the scholars by you, and through you they entrap the hearts of ignorant simple-minded ones. What a little price they gave you for that which they took from you, and instead of what they ruined from you, how little they built! Ponder upon yourself, because there is no one to be sympathetic for you save yourself; and as a responsible man reckon your account."*6

Truly this clear expressive logic of the Imam (as) can attract the attention of any courtier and dependent scholar to his evil end.

Concerning the verse under discussion, Ibn 'Abbas says:

"This verse is among the verses which attest that supporting the guilty is a crime and a sin, while helping the believers is obeying the commandment of Allah."

Once one of the scholars was told:

“So and so is the writer of an unjust person, and what he writes is only his accounts. If he takes a salary for this work, his living will be safeguarded, otherwise he and his family will seriously be involved in poverty.”

In answer to this question, the scholar only said:

“Have you not heard the word of that righteous man (Moses) who said:

‘...My Lord! For the bounty You have bestowed on me, never shall I be a supporter of the guilty.”

Ali (as) in a tradition said:

“Avoid tyranny because verily a tyrant will never smell the smell of Paradise.”[7]

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“Allah, Almighty and Glorious, says:

‘By My Honour (and Glory) I will certainly take vengeance from the unjust in this world and the next; and take vengeance from the one who sees an oppressed and he can help him but he does not help him.’”[8]

The Messenger of Allah (S) says:

“The Wrath of Allah is violent on the one who is unjust upon whom that finds no helper save Allah.”[9]

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“The oppressor, the one who helps him, and he who is content of it all three are the associates of the oppression.”[10]

Imam Ali (as) advised both Hassan and Husayn (as), saying:

“...Be enemy of the oppressor and the helper of the oppressed...”[11]

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“No oppression is more serious than oppressing the one who finds no helper for it except Allah.”[12]

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“Whoever breaks the oath of allegiance, or establishes an aberration, or hides a knowledge, or occupies one’s property unjustly, or helps an oppressor in his oppression while he knows that he is surely an oppressor, he has certainly refused Islam.”[13]

The holy Prophet (S) once said:

*“When people see an oppressor (who is committing cruelty) and do not take his hands (do not hinder him of it) it will be nigh that Allah inflicts a punishment upon them.”*14

The Holy Prophet (S) said:

*“There have been written three words on the fourth door of the doors of Hell: Allah abases the one who disgraces Islam; Allah abases the one who disgraces Ahl-ul-Bayt; Allah abases the one who helps the oppressors in their injustice upon people.”*15

Imam Amir-ul-Mu’minin Ali (as) said:

*“The most vicious of people is the one who helps (the oppressor) against the oppressed.”*16

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 18

فَأَصْبَحَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ خَآئِفاً يَتَرَقَّبُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي اسْتَنصَرَهُ بِالاَمْسِ يَسْتَصْرِخُهُ قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَي إِنَّكَ لَغَوِيٌّ مُّبِينٌ

18. “And he was in the city, fearing, awaiting, when behold, the man who had, the day before, sought his help called aloud for his help (again). Moses said to him: ‘Verily you are one erring manifestly’.”

Not any fear is blameworthy. The fear of failing in reaching some good aims and wishes is a praiseworthy fear.

In this verse, and the next verses, we are faced with the fourth scene of this adventurous story.

The news of slaughter of a man from Pharaoh’s people quickly spread in Egypt, and perhaps it was known by the frame of references that the slaughterer was a man from the Children of Israel, and perhaps the name of Moses was also mentioned in it.

This slaughter, of course, was not a simple one. It was counted a spark for a revolution, or a prerequisite for it, and the system of the government of Pharaoh could not simply ignore the event that the slaves from among the Children of Israel might intend to kill their lords.

So, as a fact next to this event, the verse says:

“And he was in the city, fearing, awaiting…”

The Arabic word /taraqqub/ means ‘wait for’; and the term /surax/ means ‘seeking help’.

Suddenly Moses was faced with a scene, as the verse says:

“…when behold, the man who had, the day before, sought his help called aloud for his help

(*again*). ***Moses said to him: 'Verily you are one erring manifestly'."***

Moses told the man that he was clearly an ignorant person, because every day he fought with a man and created trouble and did some deeds which were not suitable at that time. Moses then added that the sequences of his yesterday programs were still continued that he began another one.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 19

فَلَمَّآ أَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يَبْطِشَ بِالَّذِي هُوَ عَدُوٌّ لَهُمَا قَالَ يَا مُوسَي أَتُرِيدُ أَنْ تَقْتُلَنِي كَمَا قَتَلْتَ نَفْساً بِالاَمْسِ إِن تُرِيدُ إِلاَّ أَن تَكُونَ جَبَّاراً فِي الاَرْضِ وَمَا تُرِيدُ أَن تَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ

19. "So when he intended to assault him who was the enemy of them both, the man said: 'O Moses! Do you intend to kill me as you killed a person yesterday? You desire nothing but to be a tyrant in the land; and you do not desire to be of the reformers'."

The Arabic word /batš/ means: 'anger accompanied with severity and power'.

Criticism upon the friends' fault should not cause them to leave the fact and do not support their right.

(Though Moses criticized his friend, saying:

'...You are one erring manifestly',

yet he decided to support him again.)

The verse says:

"So when he intended to assault him who was the enemy of them both, the man said: 'O Moses! Do you intend to kill me as you killed a person yesterday? You desire nothing but to be a tyrant in the land; and you do not desire to be of the reformers'."

This sentence shows that Moses had already expressed his reforming intention both in the castle of Pharaoh and outside of it, and some narrations indicate that he had some conflicts in this field with Pharaoh, too.

That is why the Coptic man says to Moses that every day he wanted to kill a man; what a reformer he was! While if Moses decided to kill this tyrant, too, it would be a step on the way of reform.

However, Moses understood that the yesterday event had been revealed and, in order that he would not face with some more difficulties, he did not follow the matter.

By the way, Ibn Abbas, as well as the majority of the commentators of both sects, have said that the subject of the Qur'anic verb ***/qala/*** is the Israelite man for whose support Moses had killed the Coptic

man the previous day, and who fearfully said that Moses wanted to kill him as he killed the Coptic man.[17]

Surah Al-Qasas - Verses 20-21

وَجَآءَ رَجُلٌ مِنْ اَقْصَا الْمَدِينَةِ يَسْعَي قَالَ يَا مُوسَي إِنَّ الْمَلأَ يَأْتَمِرُونَ بِكَ لِيَقْتُلُوكَ فَاخْرُجْ إِنّي لَكَ مِنَ النَّاصِحِينَ

فَخَرَجَ مِنْهَا خَآئِفاً يَتَرَقَّبُ قَالَ رَبِّ نَجّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

20. "And there came a man from the furthest part of the city, running. He said: 'O Moses! Verily the chiefs are consulting to slay you. So depart (from here at once); Verily I am one of Your sincere advisers'."
21. "So he departed there from, fearing, awaiting, (and) he said: 'My Lord! Deliver me from the unjust people'."

The purpose of the Arabic word /rajul/, in this verse, is 'the Believer of the people of Pharaoh' that Surah 'Mu'min' (Qafir) in the Qur'an has been entitled by his name. He concealed his faith and in the guise of 'taqiyyah' (precautionary concealment) helped Moses.

Moses (as) had a penetrating factor and supporter in the court of Pharaoh. Sometimes, giving information promptly and on time may change the fate of a nation. (If this man did not give the news to Moses (as) and Moses did not go out from the city, then he might be killed by the men of Pharaoh.) This is why that revealing the treacherous plots is incumbent.

However, this holy verse implies that the event was informed to both Pharaoh and his entourage, and they took its repetition as a threat against their own situation. They held a meeting of consultation, and issued the command of Moses' slaughter.

At this time, an unexpected incident saved Moses from a certain death, as the verse says:

"And there came a man from the furthest part of the city, running. He said: 'O Moses! Verily the chiefs are consulting to slay you. So depart (from here at once); Verily I am one of Your sincere advisers'."

This man apparently is the same one who later became known as 'the Believer of the people of Pharaoh'. It is said that his name was Hezqil and he was one of the close relatives of Pharaoh.

Hezqil had such a communication with them that he could take part in that kind of meetings. He was suffering from the crimes of Pharaoh and he was waiting for a godly raise to happen against him so that he could join to it.

His hope was apparently to Moses in whose feature he had observed to be a godly revolutionary man. For this reason, when he felt that he was in danger, he quickly approached him and saved Moses (as) from the grips of that danger.

We will see later that not only in this event but also in some other circumstances he was a support for Moses (as), and he was counted as a keen–eyed person for the Children of Israel in the castle of Pharaoh.

The next holy verse implies that Moses (as) took this information very earnest, and valued the benevolence of that faithful man. According to his advice, Moses went out from the city while he was terrified and every moment he expected an event to happen.

The verse says:

"So he departed there from, fearing, awaiting..."

He concentrated his whole heart to Allah and for solving this great problem he sought His Grace.

The verse continues saying:

"...(and) he said: 'My Lord! Deliver me from the unjust people'."

This means: I know that they are unjust and cruel, and I defended the oppressed while I was not the supporter of the unjust; then, as I repelled the vice of the oppressors from the oppressed so much that I could, You, too, O' Almighty Lord! repel the vice of the oppressors from me.

1. Wasa'il–ush–Shi'ah, Vol. 5, P. 249; and Tafsir–us–Safi, and Tafsir–ul–Burhan, following the verse.
2. Surah under discussion, verse 15
3. The verse under discussion
4. 'Uyun–ul–'Akhbar, Nur–uth–Thaqalayn, Tafsir–us–Safi, Tafsir–ul–Burhan, Tafsir–i–Manhaj–us–Sadiqin under the verse.
5. Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 113
6. Tuhaf–ul–'Uqul, P. 66
7. Mizan–ul–Hikmah, Vol. 7, P. 33
8. Kanz–ul–'Ummal, P. 7641
9. Sunan Ibn–Dawud, Vol. 2, P. 436
10. Al–Kafi, Vol. 2, P. 333, No. 16
11. Nahj–ul–Balaqah, Letter No. 47 and sermon No. 3
12. Bihar, Vol. 72, P. 329
13. Mustadrak–ul–Wasa'il, Vol. 2, P. 137
14. Sunan Ibn–Dawud, Vol. 2, P. 436
15. Safinat–ul–Bihar, Vol. 2, P. 107
16. Mustadrak–ul–Wasa'il, Vol. 2, P. 437
17. The commentaries of Qurtabi, Majma'–ul–Bayan, Atyab–ul–Bayan, Safi, Jawami'–ul–Jami', Manhaj–us–Sadiqin, Burhan, and Makhzan–ul–'Irfan, Vol. 9

Section 3: Moses Weds Laban's Daughter

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 22

وَلَمَّا تَوَجَّهَ تِلْقَآءَ مَدْيَنَ قَالَ عَسَي رَبِّي أَن يَهْدِيَنِي سَوَآءَ السَّبِيلِ

22. "And when he turned his face towards Madyan, he said: 'I do hope that my Lord will guide me in the right path'."

Change of residence, migration, and application of various tactics are usually the means of a revolution. That is why it is necessary that at first we move and then we utter invocate and be hopeful.

Hadrat Moses (as) decided to go toward Madyan, a city in the south of Syria and the North of Arabia, which was out of the domain of Egypt and the government of Pharaoh.

But a youth, who has grown up in a comfortable and bountiful environment, and goes on a trip for the first time in his life, neither has any provision, nor a companion and guide with him, his situation is clear, in particular that he always fears that the informers arrive and capture him in order to kill him.

Yes, Moses must tolerate hardships and difficulties, and come out from the webs that the castle of Pharaoh had twisted around his personality, live beside the oppressed, feel their pain with all his entity, and become prepared for a godly raise in their favour and against the oppressors.

Therefore, when he started to go toward Madyan, he said he hoped that the Lord would guide him in the right path.

The verse says:

"And when he turned his face towards Madyan he said: 'I do hope that my Lord will guide me in the right path'."

The Arabic word /tilqa'/ here means: 'direction'.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verses 23-24

وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَآءَ مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّةً مِنَ النَّاسِ يَسْقُونَ وَوَجَدَ مِن دُونِهِمُ امْرَأَتَيْنِ تَذُودَانِ قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُمَا قَالَتَا لاَنَسْقِي حَتَّي يُصْدِرَ الرِّعَآءُ وَأَبُونَا شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ

فَسَقَي لَهُمَا ثُمَّ تَوَلَّي إِلَي الظِّلِّ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَآ أَنزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ

23. “And when he arrived at the watering (place) in Madyan, he found on it a group of men watering (their flocks), and besides them he found two women keeping back (their flocks). He said: ‘What is the matter with you?’ They said: ‘We cannot water (our flocks) until the shepherds take away (their sheep from the water), and our father is a very old man’.”
24. “So he watered (their flocks) for them, then he turned back to the shade, and said: ‘My Lord! Verily I stand in need of whatever good You may send down to me’.”

We must not misuse the modesty and weakness of women. If a system of law does not interfere, many men ignore the rights of women. The enclosure between man and woman is a value, so the daughters of Shu‘ayb observed this enclosure when watering their sheep.

Here we are confronted the fifth scene of this story. It is the arrival scene of Moses into Madyan.

This pure youth was paving the way to this city for several days, a way which he had never seen before and was not acquainted with it. As some commentators say, he had to walk the way in barefoot. It has been said that he was in the way for eight days, and he walked so much so that his feet was wounded.

To remove his hunger, he (as) consumed the plants of the desert and the leaves of the trees; and alongside all of these difficulties he had only one satisfaction and it was that, by the grace of Allah, he had been delivered from the unjust grips of the people of Pharaoh.

Little by little the landscape of Madyan appeared in the horizon and his heart got calm. When Moses reached the city, a crowd of people attracted his attention. Before long, he understood that they were some shepherds who had crowded around a well in order to give water to their flocks.

The verse says:

“And when he arrived at the watering (place) in Madyan, he found on it a group of men watering (their flocks)...”

Then the verse continues stating about two women who were taking care of their sheep but did not approach the well.

It says:

“...and besides them he found two women keeping back (their flocks)...”

The Arabic term/ tazudan/ is derived from the word /zawd/ which means: ‘to hinder, to prevent’.

The condition of those chaste girls who were standing in a corner and none was there to help them, where there were some rude shepherds who thought only about their own flocks and did not give turn to

anyone, attracted the attention of Moses. He went to them and asked them why they did not go forth for watering their sheep.

The verse says:

"...He said: 'What is the matter with you?'..."

This discrimination, injustice, cruelty, and this absence of observing the right of the oppressed, which was seen at the threshold of that city, Madyan, was not tolerable for Moses. He was the defender of the oppressed people, and because of it, Moses left the castle of Pharaoh and its favours and went vagrant of his home. He could not abandon his custom and be silent in the face of injustices.

Now, here is the answer of the girls, as the Qur'an says:

"...They said: 'We cannot water (***our flocks***) ***until the shepherds take away*** (***their sheep from the water***)***..."***

In order that this question would not remain without any answer for Moses that why the father of these chaste girls sent them after this action, they added:

"...and our father is a very old man'."

They implied that their father was very old and he was not able water the sheep, nor did they have a brother to undertake that action, and in order not to be a burden over the shoulder of others, they could not be helped but they did it themselves.

When Moses heard this word from them, he became very inconvenient and said to himself that how unjust were those people that they all thought of their own affairs and did not do the least support for the oppressed ones?

He came forth and, taking the heavy bucket, threw it into the well. It was so heavy that, as it is said, several persons had to bring it out from the well, hut Moses, by his strong hands, brought it out by himself and watered the sheep of those two.

The verse says:

"So he watered (***their flocks***) ***for them..."***

It is said that when he approached the crowd, he told them what kind of people they were that they thought not for any one other than them. Then the crowd went aside and gave the bucket to him. They told him to come and if he could he would rinse.

They knew that the bucket was so heavy that it needed ten persons to be brought out from the well. They let Moses (as) be alone, but the power of Faith came to help him and increased his bodily strength.

Though he was tired, hungry, and inconvenient, he watered completely all the sheep of those two girls by pulling out only one bucket of water from the well.

The verse continues saying:

"...then he turned back to the shade, and said: 'My Lord! Verily I stand in need of whatever good You may send down to me'."

Yes, Moses was tired and hungry. He was a stranger in that city and had no place to refuge.

But, in the meanwhile, he was not impatient, and he was so polite that even at the time of supplication he did not say: *'O Lord! Do so and so'*, but he said:

"...'My Lord! Verily I stand in need of whatever good You may send down to me'."

That is, he mentioned only his need and left the rest of it to the grace of Allah.

Through a divine utterance, Allah said:

*"O Moses! Ask Me for whatever you are in need of, even if it is the grass for your sheep and the salt of your bread."*1

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 25

فَجَآءَتْهُ إِحْدَاهُمَا تَمْشِي عَلَي اسْتِحْيَآءٍ قَالَتْ إِنَّ أَبِي يَدْعُوكَ لِيَجْزِيَكَ أَجْرَ مَا سَقَيْتَ لَنَا فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُ وَقَصَّ عَلَيْهِ الْقَصَصَ قَالَ لاَ تَخَفْ نَجَوْتَ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

25. "Afterwards one of the two (***damsels***) ***came to him walking bashfully. She said: 'Verily my father invites you that he may give you the reward of your having watered for us'. So when he came to him and narrated unto him his story,*** (***the old man***) ***said: 'Be not afraid; you are secure from the unjust people'."***

According to the holy Qur'an, modesty is one of the most distinguished accomplishments of a chaste woman. Therefore, a woman must ply outside of the house with modesty and chastity. Father must be aware of the conduct of his children and show a suitable reaction for their actions.

(When Shu'ayb noticed that his daughters came back sooner than other days, he asked them its reason and decided to thank Moses.)

Now, look that how significant a deed of benevolence is! And how much marvellous bounties it has!

Doing a single action for Allah, and bringing one bucket of water out of a well in order to support an unknown oppressed person, causes a new chapter to appear in the life of Moses, and brings so much

material and spiritual bounties for him. He obtained a gift, his wife, for which he had probably to search for many years.

It began as follows:

"Afterwards one of the two (damsels) came to him walking bashfully. She said: 'Verily my father invites you that he may give you the reward of your having watered for us'..."

A special light of hope appeared in his heart, as if Moses (as) felt that an important event was going to happen, and he would meet a great man, a gratitude man who did not agree that even the labour of a person, even as much as driving a bucket of water from the well, remained without being rewarded. He must be a particular man, a godly man. O my Lord! What a precious chance!

Yes, that old man was Shu'ayb, the Divine prophet, who had been inviting people to Allah in that city for many years. He was an example of 'gratitude' and devotion to truth and justice, and when he was informed of the subject, he decided to pay his debt to this unacquainted young man, whoever he might be.

Moses started going towards Shu'ayb's house. According to some Islamic narrations, in order to show the way, the girl went ahead and Moses walked behind her. The wind was blowing to the girls' clothing so hard that the clothes might be removed from her body.

The modesty and chastity of Moses (as) did not let him be so. Then he told the girl that he would go ahead and on the crossroads she could guide him.2

Moses entered Shu'ayb's house. It was a house in which the light of prophethood and spirituality was seen everywhere. An old man, with majesty and dignity, having white hair on his head, said welcome to Moses.

He said to Moses:

"Where do you come from? What is your business? What do you do in this city? What is your purpose here? Why are you alone?"

And some other questions like them.

Moses told his own story for Shu'ayb.

The Qur'an says:

"...So when he came to him and narrated unto him his story, (the old man) said: 'Be not afraid; you are secure from the unjust people'."

Our region is out of their realm, and they do not dominate here. Let no horror be in your heart. You are

in a secure land, and you may not suffer from loneliness and strangerhood, because everything will be solved by the Grace of Allah.

Soon Moses (as) realized that he had found a great teacher, Shu‘ayb, in whose entity there were pure springs of knowledge, gnosis, piety, and spirituality, and he could satiate him well.

Shu‘ayb also felt that he had got a worthy, receptive and qualified learner to whom he could transfer the science, knowledge and experiences of his whole life. Yes, as much as that a learner gets gratification from finding a great teacher, the teacher is also happy for finding a worthy student.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 26

قَالَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا يَآ أَبَتِ اسْتَأْجِرْهُ إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنِ اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الأَمِينُ

26. “One of the two (damsels) said: ‘O my father! Employ him. Verily the best of those that you can employ is the strong man, the faithful one’.”

Hadrat Imam Rida (as) once said:

“Hadrat Shu‘ayb asked her daughter: ‘How did you recognize the trustworthiness of this youth that you called him faithful?’ She said: ‘When I conveyed your invitation to him, he told me to guide him from his behind in order that he might not look at my stature.”[3]

The girls of a family have the right of suggestion based upon logic and wisdom, too; and good relations between parents and children, and freedom of exposition and declaration in the family is a value.

This is the sixth scene from the life of Moses (as) in this great event.

Moses (as) entered the house of Shu‘ayb; it was a simple rural house, a pure house full of spirituality. When he explained his story life for Shu‘ayb, one of his daughters began speaking and by a short but expressive expression suggested her father to employ him for protecting their sheep, because he had taken the examination of his power and purity and faithfulness both.

The verse says:

“One of the two (damsels) said: ‘O my father! Employ him. Verily the best of those that you can employ is the strong man, the faithful one’.”

A girl who has been grown up in the house of a great prophet must speak like this, so politely and accurately, and she utters the Truth with the least words and in some short sentences.

How did this girl know that this young man was both strong and trustworthy, notwithstanding it was the

first time that she had seen him beside the well and his background was not clear for her?

The answer to this question is evident. She found out his strength when he went toward the well and put the shepherds aside for getting the right of these oppressed girls, and driving the bucket out of well by himself. His trustworthiness and honesty was proved when, on the way to the house, he did not agree that a young girl walks in front of him and the wind might displace her clothes.

Moreover, through the truthful explanation of his life story that he stated for Shu'ayb both his strength became clear, because he struggled against the Coptic, and his trustworthiness and honesty, because he did not collude with the tyrants.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 27

قَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُنكِحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ عَلَى أَن تَأْجُرَنِي ثَمَانِيَ حِجَجٍ فَإِنْ أَتْمَمْتَ عَشْراً فَمِنْ عِندِكَ وَمَآ أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَشُقَّ عَلَيْكَ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَآءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

27. "He said: 'Verily I intend to wed one of these two daughters of mine to you on condition that you serve me for eight years, but if you complete ten, it will be of your own free will, and I do not wish to be hard to you, if Allah wills, you will find me one the righteous ones."

Here Shu'ayb welcomed the suggestion of her daughter, as it is mentioned in the translation of the verse. But there are a few questions in this regard.

Firstly, doubt in marrying one of these two girls is meaningless, since both husband and wife must be specified. Secondly, doubt in the length of time, where eight years or ten years, is not correct either. Thirdly, the contract of hire is on behalf of Shu'ayb, whereas the wife is the possessor of the wedding gift.

The answers to these questions are as follows:

A, doubt here means that each of the girls that both parties agree is defined at the time of marriage.

B, the contract of hire is based on eight years, but at last, if Moses desires, he can add two years.

C, it does not matter that the wife appoints her dower on benefit of someone else. For example, she may say that her dower is one hundred dollars which will be given to the poor as charity.

Some Islamic narrations indicate that at the time of the Messenger of Allah (S) many people married with the dower of teaching a Surah of the Qur'an, or one derham, or a pound of wheat given to the poor.

However, Moses (as) accepted to be at the service of Shu'ayb. In the mead-time, Shu'ayb (as) said he did not want that during that time (eight or ten years) to be strict and severe to Moses and put on his

shoulder some labours other than protecting their sheep.

The verse says:

“He said: ‘Verily I intend to wed one of these two daughters of mine to you on condition that you serve me for eight years, but if you complete ten, it will be of your own free will, and I do not wish to be hard to you, if Allah wills, you will find me one the righteous ones.”

The last sentence of the verse means: if Allah lets him (Moses) be alive, they will find righteousness and competency in him; otherwise, Allah may take his life from him and He does not give him the success of offering righteousness and competency from him.

Yahy–ibn–Salam says:

“Shu‘ayb told Moses that every new born lamb whose colour was not like that of its mother would belong to Moses. Then all the new born lambs had a colour different from their mothers.”

Some other commentators have said that Shu‘ayb promised Moses that in that year every lamb whose head was black and its body was white it would belong to Moses. Then all the children of the sheep were born in the same colour.

Some Points

1– There are two main conditions for correct administration.

In the short sentence which was mentioned in the above verses from the tongue of Shu‘ayb’s daughter about employing Moses, the Most important and the most methodical conditions of administration were stated in a summarized and general form: power and trustworthiness.

It is evident that the purpose of power is not only the bodily strength, but the objective is the power and ability of performing the responsibility. A powerful and trustworthy physician is the one who is acknowledged enough of his job and has a full dominance on it.

A strong administrator is a person who knows his realm of mission well, is rather aware of the ‘motives’, is mastered in planning, has enough share of originative faculty, and has the necessary skill in ‘arranging the affairs’. He must make the aims clear, and mobilize the powers for reaching the aim. In the meantime, he must be kind, sympathetic, benevolent, trustworthy and honest.

Those who suffice to only trustworthiness and honesty for giving the responsibilities and jobs to someone are in fault as much as they consider that, for accepting responsibility, having expertness is enough. The treacherous specialists and evil conversant factors are as harmful as the unaware honest persons.

If we decide to destroy a country, we must give the affairs to one of these two groups: the treacherous administrators, and the honest ones who are not administrator, and the fruit of both is the same.

The logic of Islam is that every affair should be given to some powerful, capable, and trustworthy persons so that the system of the society ends properly. If we study the causes of the defection of governments in the length of history, we will see that the main factor has been giving the affairs to one of the abovementioned two groups.

It is interesting that everywhere in Islamic programs often 'knowledge' and 'piety' have come beside each other. An authority of imitation must be just and expert in the Islamic jurisprudence. A judge and a leader must be both expert in Islamic jurisprudence and also be just.

(Besides these two conditions there are also some other conditions, but these two are the basic ones: 'knowledge' and cognizance accompanied with justice and piety).

The second subject is the answer to a few questions about the marriage of Shu'ayb's daughter with Moses.

We said that the above noble verses have caused a lot of questions to come forth all of which must be answered in a condensed way:

A: Is it correct that a girl who wants to be married with a person may not be precisely distinguished, and at the time of reciting the marriage contract it is said to the bridegroom that one of these two girls is married with you?

Answer: It is not definite that the above expression has been said at the time of the recitation of marriage contract, but the apparent is that at first there is the primary debate and agreement, and after the agreement of Moses, the two parties choose each other and then the formula of marriage contract is executed.

B: Can dower be set ambiguously, and between a small and a large sum?

Answer: From the tone of the verse, it is clearly understood that the real dower had been serving for eight years, and the other two years depended on the will and desire of Moses.

C: In principal, can 'working and service' be set as dower? And how this spouse can be touched and associated with while the time of the payment of the dower has not come yet, and he is not even able to pay all of it at once?

Answer: There is no evidence for the lack of permission of such a dower, but in our religion, everything which has value is also included for dower. It is not compulsory that the entire of the dower must be paid in a lamp.

It is enough that all of it is in protective covenant of the husband and the wife owns it. The principle of health and 'authorizing the previous state' also judges that this husband will remain alive and will have the ability of doing this service.

D: In principal, how can serving to the father be the dower of the daughter? Is the girl a material that may be sold for a service?

Answer: No doubt Shu'ayb had got the agreement of his daughter about this issue, and he had a representation and authority to execute the formula of such a marriage contract.

In other words, the main owner of Moses' protective covenant was that very daughter of Shu'ayb, but in view of the fact that the living of all of them was passing in a common form with utmost serenity, and purity so that there was not any separation between them, (as even now in many old or rural families it is seen that the living of a family is completely mixed), it was no problem that how that debt ought to be paid.

Shortly speaking, the owner of the dower was only the daughter, not the father, and the service of Moses (as) was also in this way.

E: The dower of Shu'ayb's daughter had been a rather heavy dower, because if we count the work of an ordinary worker in a month and in a year and then multiply it to eight, it will be a considerable sum.

Answer: Firstly, this marriage was not a simple marriage, but it was a preliminary cause for Moses to remain in the school of Shu'ayb. It was a preparation for Moses to study in a great university during that long term, and only Allah knows how many things Moses learnt from the learned old man of Madyan.

Moreover, if Moses worked for Shu'ayb during this term, instead of it Shu'ayb would safeguard all the living of Moses and his wife from the same way. Therefore, if we decrease the expenditure of Moses and his wife from the wage of this labour, there will not remain so considerable sum, and we 'will attest that it was a simple and light dower'.

The third matter is that it is understood from this story that our nowadays custom that we consider the suggestion of the father and relations of the girl for marriage with a youth as a blemish, is not correct.

There is no impediment that the close relatives of the girl find a person who is appropriate for marrying their child and suggest him, as Shu'ayb did. Similar to this action has been seen among some of the notables of Islam.

The fourth matter is that the names of Shu'ayb's daughters have been recorded 'Safurah' (or Safura) and 'Laya', that the former married Moses.[4]

The fifth matter: Labour and labourer: Allah has desired people to work and make the earth habitable, which will not obtain unless with effort and endeavour.

The Qur'an says:

"...It is He Who produced you from the earth and settled you therein..." [5]

The Qur'an thoroughly emphasized on righteous deed which has a very vast meaning. Many prophets of Allah have been farmer, shepherd, tailor, and carpenter. In Islam working is worship and it is considered as Holy Struggle,[6] and the invocation of a jobless person is not accepted.

Work is a means of training both body and spirit, filling the hours of leisure, a hindrance of mischief and disturbance. It is a factor of growth, genius, originative faculty, economic development, honour, self-sufficiency, and helping others.

The Qur'an says:

"It is He Who has made the earth manageable for you, so traverse you through its tracts and enjoy of the sustenance which He furnishes..." [7]

Islam has considered a special value and respect for labour, and has advised that the right of labourer must be observed, his consent be gained, his wage be paid quickly with some addition to the appointed one, and respecting him in all instances. In Islam, satiating the trees by a farmer deserves the satiating believers.

Hadrat Ali (as) advised one of his governor-generals that the farmers might not be done unjustly, and they should be favoured when taking tax from them.[8]

In Islam mental activities are also valued highly, so much that a useful hour of contemplation is better than some hours of worship. Laziness and carelessness in work is criticized.

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

"Allah likes that whoever does a thing, he does it well." [9]

The Qur'an advises that after finishing an important action another action should begin. Therefore, laziness is forbidden.

The Qur'an says:

***"So when you have finished** (**with your immediate task**)**, still strive hard,** (**then toil**)."* [10]

Yes, idleness causes fatigue, laziness, weariness, and a chance for Satan to penetrate, creation of corruption, and spread of vice.

Islam, of course, has assigned some hours and wages for working, and those who work during holidays are entitled 'oppressors'.[11]

Hadrat Imam Rida (as) said:

"A believer must divide his busy time into four parts: a part for working, a part for worship, a part for friends and dealing with social affairs. Otherwise, man will turn to be a greedy person who deserves all critics which are about greed."[12]

Islam has a special attention to the quality of the work, not its quantity.

The Qur'an says:

"...which of you is the best in conduct..."[13]

However, Islam attaches importance to work, so much that we read in Islamic traditions:

"Allah takes the one who sleeps too much and an idle, jobless (disengaged) person as an enemy."[14]

Imam Baqir (as) said:

"He who is lazy in his worldly work, is also lazy in his hereafter work."[15]

A tradition indicates that once a poor jobless man came to the Prophet (S) and asked help. The Prophet asked the companions whether there was anyone who had an ax in his home. Someone answered he had.

He fetched it and the Prophet (S) equipped it with a steak and gave it to that jobless man and said:

"Here is the tool of job, but you must strive yourself."[16]

We can understand several points from this tradition, as follows:

1- The Divine prophets take the life of people under consideration, too.

2- The weakest person of the society can meet the first personality of the society.

3- Society is in need of help and cooperation. One gives an ax, another person provides its stick, and the Prophet (S) arranges them and makes an ax.

4- For struggling against poverty, the implements of production must be given to the active factors of the society. However, for employing persons, they necessarily must have two elements of: ability (expertness) and trustworthiness.

The abilities and trustworthiness of persons of course, must be made known and defined in ordinary conditions and without the attention of the concerning person. (Many persons cover their reality artificially, flatteringly and hypocritically. But Hadrat Moses, in a natural scene, showed himself by a supporting action and a modestly meeting.)

Once Imam Sadiq (as) was asked which girl went after Moses (as). He answered:

“The one who became his wife.”

They asked him which term of the two terms Moses finished. Imam answered the longer and more complete one, (that is, ten years). They asked whether Moses wedded his wife before ten years or after it.

He answered:

“Before ten years”.

They asked him whether a man can marry a woman and makes a condition with her father to be hired for two months for him.

He answered:

“Moses knew that he would finish this condition.”

They asked:

“How did he know it?”

Imam (as) said:

“He knew that he would remain alive and act according to the condition.”[17]

The Importance of Marriage

Some Islamic narrations indicate that marriage causes half of the person’s religion to be protected. Two units prayer of the person who has spouse is better than seventy units prayer of those who are not married. The sleep of the married persons is better than the fast of the wakeful unmarried ones.[18]

Yes, in spite of those who think of marriage as the factor of poverty, the Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“Marriage causes the sustenance to be increased.”

Also he said:

“He who abandons marriage because of the fear of poverty is not of us, and has thought ill of Allah.”[19]

Some Islamic narrations denote: he, who takes an action on the marriage of his brethren, will be favoured by a special favour of Allah on the Day of Hereafter.[20]

Regarding the ‘formation of a family’ and taking an action for marriage, the Holy Qur’an has seriously ordered and recommended not to be afraid of poverty. If you are poor, Allah will enrich you out of His

grace.[21]

Marriage is a means of peace[22]. By marriage families approach each other and the hearts will become kind, then the suitable ground of training a pure generation with a spirit of cooperation will be prepared.

We read in Islamic narrations to hasten for marriage. The girl whose term of marriage has come is like a ripe fruit that if it does not be separated from the tree, it will decay.[23]

Choosing a Spouse

The criterions of choosing a good spouse among people are: wealth, beauty, linage and nobility, while an Islamic tradition indicates that you must pay attention to belief, kind of thought and insight.[24]

Another tradition indicates that there had been many beauties that caused destruction, and wealth that caused disobedience.[25]

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“If a person came to solicit your daughter in marriage and you approved his religion and trustworthiness, you should not refuse him, else you will get into a great disturbance and decadence.”[26]

Hadrat Imam Hassan (as) told the one who was consulting him (as) for the marriage of his daughter:

“Choose a pious bridegroom so that if he loves your daughter, he will respect her, and if he does not love her, because of his piety he will not do unjustly to her.”[27]

Some Islamic narrations indicate that daughters must not be married to men who drink alcoholic liquors, are ill-tempered, and have not a safe line of thought, and those who have grown up in corruptive families.[28]

Once the Messenger of Allah (S), addressing people, said:

“Avoid the plants grown in ruins.”

He was asked:

“What are the plants grown in ruins?”

He said:

“A beautiful lady who has been grown up in a corrupt family.”[29]

The Holy Prophet (S) said:

“The best women of my Ummah are the most beautiful ones and have the least dower.”[30]

It should also be mentioned that marriage is of two kinds: permanent marriage and temporary marriage about both of which there are special commandments and recommendations in the Qur'an and Islamic narrations.

Unfortunately, because of some incorrect customs and pretexts and undue expectations of some of the members of the family of bride or bridegroom and having vain desires, the permanent marriage has appeared in the form of a difficult, puzzle or an impracticable pass; and the temporary marriage has also been counted so ugly and reprobated that indecency has occupied its place.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 28

قَالَ ذَلِكَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ أَيَّمَا الاَجَلَيْنِ قَضَيْتُ فَلاَ عُدْوَانَ عَلَيَّ وَاللَّهُ عَلَي مَا نَقُولُ وَكِيلٌ

28. "(Moses accepted Shu'ayb's suggestion and) said: 'This shall be (an agreement) between me and you, whichever of the two terms I fulfil, there shall be no injustice unto me, and Allah is a witness of what we say'."

In marriage contracts, faith in Allah guarantees the safety of contracts.

Here is the statement of Moses as the acceptance of this contract:

"(Moses accepted Shu'ayb's suggestion and) said: 'This shall be (an agreement) between me and you, whichever of the two terms I fulfil, there shall be no injustice unto me..."

Then, in order to fasten it and getting help from the Name of Allah, he added:

"...and Allah is a witness of what we say'."

So simply and easily Moses (as) became the son-in-law of Shu'ayb (as).

In all his affairs, even in his own voluntary deeds, man is not independent; he is under the will of Allah and Divine providence.

Whatever Allah desires, it 'will Be', and whatever Allah does not desire, it 'will not Be'; and also '*there is neither might nor strength but in Allah*'. In any circumstance man's reliance must be to Allah; and reliance and trust is one of the concerns of unity of Divine Acts. Absolutely, man must set the tools aside and be in an entire submission. This is a particular Unity.

By the way, some commentators have said that Moses asked for a stick from Shu'ayb in order to drive the sheep. Shu'ayb had several sticks and he told Moses to take one of them. He took the stick, which Gabriel had brought from Heaven for Adam. That stick had a light at night.

Imam Baqir (as) said:

"A stick was brought from Heaven for Adam, then it came to Shu'ayb. Then, it was given to Moses and now that stick is with us. It spoke whenever it was spoken to, and it accomplished whatever it was ordered to do."[31]

1. Wasa'il-ush-Shi'ah, Vol. 4, P. 1090
2. The Commentary of Abul-Futuh Razi, following the verse
3. Bihar-ul-Anwar, Vol. 13, P. 44
4. Majma'-ul-Bayan, Vol. 7, P. 249
5. Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 61
6. Wasa'il-ush-Shi'ah, Vol. 12, P. 43
7. Surah Al-Mulk, No. 67, verse 15
8. Tafsir-i-Nur, No. 9, P. 4
9. Ibid
10. Surah 'Inshirah, No. 94, verse 7
11. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 65
12. Tafsir-i-Nur, Vol. 2, P. 41
13. Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 7
14. Wasa'il-ush-Shi'ah, Vol. 11, P. 37
15. Ibid
16. Tafsir-i-Nur, Vol. 9, P. 42
17. Majma'-ul-Bayan, following the verse
18. Mizan-ul-Hikam, narrated from Bihar-ul-'Anwar, Vol. 103, P. 25/221
19. Kanz-ul-'Ummal, No. 44460
20. Kafi, Vol. 5, P. 331
21. Surah An-Nur, No. 24, verse 32
22. the Holy Qur'an, Surah Ar-Room, verse 21
23. Wasa'il-Ush-Shi'ah, Vol. 14, chapter 33 and 38
24. Kanz-ul-'Ummal, No. 46602
25. Sunan Ibn-Majeh, No. 1859, and Mizan-ul-Hikam, Vol. 5, P. 2256
26. Bihar, Vol. 103, P. 372
27. Makarim-ul-Akhlagh, Vol. 1, P. 446
28. Bihar-ul-'Anwar, Vol. 79, P. 142 and Mizan-ul-Hikam, Vol. 5, P. 2558
29. Bihar, Vol. 103, P. 232
30. Bihar, Vol. 103, P. 237
31. 'Atyab-ul-Bayan, Manhaj-us.Sadiqin, Majma'-ul-Bayan, Safi, Burhan, following the verse

Section 4: Moses Commissioned with Apostleship

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 29

فَلَمَّا قَضَي مُوسَي الأَجَلَ وَسَارَ بأَهْلِهِ ءَانَسَ مِن جَانِبِ الطُّورِ نَاراً قَالَ لاَهْلِهِ امْكُثُوا إِنّي ءَانَسْتُ نَاراً لَعَلّي ءَاتِيكُم مِنْهَا
بِخَبَرٍ أَوْ جَذْوَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ

29. "So when Moses had fulfilled the term, and he journeyed with his family, he observed a fire in the direction of Mount Tur. He said to his family: 'Tarry you here; verily I observe a fire. Perhaps I shall bring you news of it, or a brand of the fire, so that you may warm yourselves'."

The Arabic term /'anastu/ means to observe something in which there is intimacy and peace. The word ***/ja�wah/*** means 'a piece', and the Qur'anic phrase ***/tastalun/*** is derived from /saly/ which means 'to be heated by fire'.

Hadrat Musa had addressed his wife with plural form of Arabic pronoun, in terms such as ***/'umkuul/, /'atikum/, /la'allakum/*** and ***/tastalun/.*** It is perhaps for the reason that during the ten years that Moses was living with his wife he got a child or children.

It is understood from the sentences:

'***he journeyed with his family***',
'***I shall bring you news of it***',

and

'***so that you may warm yourselves***',

and also the sentence which says:

"...or may find some guidance at the fire",1

that Moses (as) has traveled by night. It was a cold and dark night during the time when Moses lost his way, too.

Here we reach the seventh scene of the story life of Moses (as).

No one exactly knows how Moses spent that term of ten years, but certainly that term was among the best years of Moses' lifetime. It was some wholesome, sweet and peaceful years when he became prepared for a great mission.

Indeed, it was necessary for Moses (as) to pass a ten-year-term in strangerhood and beside a great prophet. He had to be a shepherd so that if the habit of living in a castle had left any effect on his thought and spirit, it would have been washed off entirely. Moses must be among some poor people in

order to understand their pain and be prepared for struggling against rich tyrants.

On the other hand, Moses ought to have a long time for contemplation upon the secrets of creation and for self- improvement. Where was it for him better than the desert of Madyan? And where was it better than the house of Shu‘ayb for him to remain?

The mission of an arch-prophet is not so simple that it can be easily undertaken. It can be said that, next to the Prophet of Islam (S), from one point of view, the mission of Moses (as) among the Divine prophets on the earth put an end to the captivity of a large nation, and he wiped out the traces of the culture of slavery from their spirit, all of which were not so easy.

It is written in Torah, as well as the Islamic narrations, that Shu‘ayb had promised Moses to give him the lambs which were born with a special colour, in order to appreciate Moses' troubles.

By chance, in the last year, when Moses intended to say good-by with Shu‘ayb and return to Egypt, all or most of the lambs were born with the same specialty and Shu‘ayb willingly gave all of them to Moses, too.2

It is obvious that Moses did not suffice to be a shepherd until the end of his life, though being at the presence of Shu‘ayb was very enjoying for him. He ought to hasten to help his people who were captured in the chains of captivity and ignorance.

He ought to put an end to the injustices in Egypt, to break the idols, to abase the despots, and to elevate the oppressed by the help of Allah. An innate feeling encouraged Moses for this journey.

At last, Moses gathered his furniture, provision, and sheep and set out for the journey.

However, the application of the Arabic word /'ahl/ (family) mentioned in numerous verses of the Qur'an, shows that, besides his wife, Moses had a child (or children) with him in that journey. Some Islamic narrations verify this meaning, and in Torah, Exodus, it has been stipulated. Moreover his wife was pregnant at that time.

When he was coming back, he lost the way, and perhaps it was for the reason that he went a by-way so that he might not be seized by the grips of the Syrian oppressors.

However, the Qur'an says:

"So when Moses had fulfilled the term, and he journeyed with his family, he observed a fire in the direction of Mount Tur. He said to his family: 'Tarry you here; verily I observe a fire. Perhaps I shall bring you news of it, or a brand of the fire, so that you may warm yourselves'."

There is not anything mentioned in the verse about the situation of Moses' wife, but it is generally accepted by the commentaries and narrations that she was pregnant and at that time she felt the pain of

delivery, and Moses was also anxious from this point of view.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 30

فَلَمَّآ أَتَاهَا نُودِيَ مِن شَاطِئِ الْوَادِ الآيْمَنِ فِي الْبُقْعَةِ الْمُبَارَكَةِ مِنَ الشَّجَرَةِ أَن يَامُوسَي إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ

30. "Then when he came to it** (he) **was called** (by a voice) **from the right side of the valley, in the blessed spot, from the tree, saying: 'O Moses! Verily I am Allah, the Lord of the worlds'."

When Moses approached the fire he saw that it was a fire not alike other fires; it was not hot and not burning. It was entirely light and serenity. Meanwhile, Moses was seriously wondered, suddenly from the right side of the valley in that blessed high land, from inside of the tree, a voice was heard, addressing Moses, saying that He was Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

Here is the verse:

"Then when he came to it** (he) **was called** (by a voice) **from the right side of the valley, in the blessed spot, from the tree, saying: 'O Moses! Verily I am Allah, the Lord of the worlds'."

The Arabic word /šati'/ means 'bank'; and the term /wadi/ means 'valley' or 'the pass way of a torrent'; and the Qur'anic word ***/'ayman/*** means 'right' which is a modifier for the Qur'anic word ***/šati'/***; and the Arabic word/ ***/buq'ah/*** means a piece of land which is usually distinguished with respect to the lands around it.

No doubt Allah is able to create the sound waves inside whatever He desires. Here He created it inside a tree for He wanted to speak with Moses, and Moses was a body and he had ears and needed the sound waves.

Many of the divine prophets, of course, received the revelation by their inward inspiration, and sometimes by dream, but sometimes by means of hearing the sound waves. However, there is no room for this delusion that we consider a physical being for Allah.

Some narrations indicate that when Moses went near the fire, he noticed that the fire glittered from inside of a green branch and every moment it became brighter and more beautiful. He bent to take some of it with the small piece of wood he had in his hand, but the fire came toward him.

He terrified and came back. Sometimes he went toward the fire and sometimes the fire came towards him. Then, all of a sudden, a voice gave him the glad tidings of revelation. Thus, by the undeniable frame of references it became clear for Moses that this call was the call of Allah (s.w.t.), not other than Him.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 31

وَأَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَآنٌّ وَلَّي مُدْبِراً وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ يَامُوسَي أَقْبِلْ وَلاَ تَخَفْ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الأَمِنِينَ

31. "And saying: 'Cast down your staff.' So when he saw it in motion as if it were a serpent, he turned back retreating, and did not return. (Then it was said to him): 'O Moses! Come you forward and fear you not! For surely you are in security!'"

Regarding the heavy and great responsibilities that Moses had, there should have been bestowed on him some great miracles proportionate to them from the side of Allah that two important parts of which are referred to in this verse.

The first thing was that Moses was called to cast down his staff and Moses did. When he looked at it he saw that it was a serpent which was moving swiftly. Moses returned back because of fear so that he did not look at his behind.

The verse says:

"And saying: 'Cast down your staff.' So when he saw it in motion as if it were a serpent, he turned back retreating, and did not return..."

The day when Moses chose this staff for him to lean on it, and to beat down leaves with it for his sheep[3], he did not believe that there was such a great power in it by the command of Allah.

This simple staff of a shepherd caused the castles of the tyrants to shake, and thus are the beings of this world that they seem small in our view but there are great potentialities in them which can be revealed by the command of Allah.

At this time, Moses heard the voice again as a command.

The verse continues saying:

"...(Then it was said to him): 'O Moses! Come you forward and fear you not! For surely you are in security!'"

The Arabic word /jann/ originally means 'an unseen being', and it is also applied for small snakes, because they pass through grasses and furrows of the land in an unseen way. Of course, in some other verses of the Qur'an, it has been referred to as /u'ban un mubin/ (a clear serpent).[4]

Formerly we have said that these differences of meaning may state the different shapes of that snake which at first was small and then appeared as a great serpent. This is also probable that when Moses saw it for the first time in Tur land, it was in its smallest size, and in later stages it became bigger and

bigger.

However, Moses should become acquainted with this fact that at the presence of Allah there is an absolute security, and in that rank there is no room for any fear and scare.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verses 32-33

اسْلُكْ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجْ بَيْضَآءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوءٍ وَاضْمُمْ إِلَيْكَ جَنَاحَكَ مِنَ الرَّهْبِ فَذَانِكَ بُرْهَانَانِ مِن رَّبِّكَ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْماً فَاسِقِينَ

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي قَتَلْتُ مِنْهُمْ نَفْساً فَأَخَافُ أَن يَقْتُلُونِ

32. "(Now) enter your hand into the your bosom, and it will come forth white (radiant) without evil, and draw your arm to yourself to ward off fear; and these (two miracles) be two proofs from your Lord unto Pharaoh and his chiefs, verily they have been a transgressing people."
33. "He said: 'My Lord! Verily I have killed one of them, so I fear that they would slay me'."

The first miracle of Moses, that his staff became a serpent, was a sign of terror. After that, he was ordered to apply his second miracle, which was a sign of light and hope. Then both of them are a combination of 'warning' and 'glad tidings'.

Moses was ordered:

"(Now) enter your hand into the your bosom, and it will come forth white (radiant) without evil..."

This whiteness and radiance was not because of the disease of leprosy, and the like; it was a Divine light for him which was completely new.

The observation of those wonderful supernatural events, in that dark night and in that empty desert, caused Moses (as) to shake vigorously. In order that he could regain his peace and calmness, he was ordered another commandment.

It was as follows:

"...and draw your arm to yourself to ward off fear..."

Some commentators have said that this sentence ironically means the necessity of decisiveness and firm decision in fulfilment of the responsibility of prophethood, and the lack of any fear and horror from any rank and any power.

Some other commentators have also thought that when the staff was changed into a snake, Moses (as)

stretched his arms to defend himself, but Allah ordered him to draw back his arms and he should not fear, because he did not need to defend himself.

The application of /janah/ (wing) instead of 'hand' is a beautiful meaning that, perhaps, its purpose is to liken the state of man's tranquility and calmness to the state of a bird that when it observes a frightening thing, it flies, but when it regains its calmness, it gathers its wings.

Again, Moses heard the same voice, saying:

"...and these** (**two miracles**) **be two proofs from your Lord unto Pharaoh and his chiefs, verily they have been a transgressing people."

Yes, these people have gone out from the obedience of Allah, and they have disobeyed Him very violently. It is upon you that you advise them, but if it is of no avail, you must struggle against them.

Here Moses remembered the important event of his life in Egypt, the event of killing that Coptic man and mobilization of the forces of Pharaoh to avenge his blood. Although Moses had combated with that oppressor, these things had no meaning in the logic of Pharaoh. He is still decided to kill Moses without dispute if he finds him.

That is why here Moses speaks to Allah: as follows:

"He said: 'My Lord! Verily I have killed one of them, so I fear that they would slay me'."

Surah Al-Qasas - Verses 34-35

وَأَخِي هَارُونَ هُوَ أَفْصَحُ مِنِّي لِسَاناً فَأَرْسِلْهُ مَعِيَ رِدْءاً يُصَدِّقُنِي إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَن يُكَذِّبُونِ

قَالَ سَنَشُدُّ عَضُدَكَ بِأَخِيكَ وَنَجْعَلُ لَكُمَا سُلْطَاناً فَلاَ يَصِلُونَ إِلَيْكُمَا بِآيَاتِنَآ أَنتُمَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكُمَا الْغَالِبُونَ

34. "And my brother Aaron, he is more eloquent in speech than I, so send him with me as an assistant, to testify me, surely I fear that they would reject me."
35. "**(**Allah**) **said: 'We will strengthen your arm with your brother, and We will give you both an authority, so that they shall not reach you;** (**go**) **with Our signs; you two and those who follow you two shall be the triumphant'."

In giving heavy responsibilities to someone, all dimensions of the concerning person must be regarded. Although Hadrat Harun (Aaron) was older and more eloquent than Hadrat Moses (as), but for other good qualities and competencies that Moses had, he became responsible of this mission, while Aaron was a Divine prophet, too.

In the way of propagation, guidance, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, sometimes two or more persons must take an action.

"...so send him with me..."

That is why in the verse Moses (as) implicitly utters that he is alone and his tongue is not eloquent.

The verse says:

"And my brother Aaron, he is more eloquent in speech than I, so send him with me as an assistant, to testify me, surely I fear that they would reject me."

The Arabic term /'afsah/ is derived from /fasih/ which originally refers to 'the purity of something'; and it is used for a pure, expressive speech which is free from any redundancy and unnecessary words. The Qur'anic word ***/rid'***/ means: 'Assistant'.

However, in view of the fact that this mission was very great and heavy, and Moses wanted not to fail in it, he asked Allah for it.

By the way, confessing the accomplishments of others is a virtue and a value. Therefore, though Moses (as) was an arch prophet he confessed the virtue of his brother, because an eloquent speech is one of the factors of attracting people and that of a successful propagation.

By the next verse, Allah accepted Moses' invocation, too, and gave him enough confidence, as it says:

"(Allah) said: 'We will strengthen your arm with your brother, and We will give you both an authority, so that they shall not reach you; (go) with Our signs; you two and those who follow you two shall be the triumphant'."

What a great glad tidings! It was a glad tidings that not only encouraged the heart of Moses, but also caused his decision to become firm, and made his will very strong, the clear sequels of which will be explained later through some other topics of this story.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 36

فَلَمَّا جَآءهُم مُّوسَى بِآيَاتِنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلاَّ سِحْرٌ مُّفْتَرًى وَمَا سَمِعْنَا بِهَذَا فِي ءَابَآئِنَا الأَوَّلِينَ

36. "So when Moses came to them with Our clear signs, they said: 'This is nothing but a forged sorcery, and we never heard of it amongst our fathers of old'."

Accusation and slander is one of the greatest weapons of the tyrants against the reformers.

In accepting beliefs, the criterion is logic and reasoning, not the habit of the fathers,

“...and we never heard of it...”.

The teachings of the divine prophets are not to follow the old customs.

However, at that dark night and in that holy land Moses (as) received the command of prophethood from Allah. He came into Egypt and informed his brother, Aaron, of this important mission and conveyed the message of the great prophecy to him.

Both of them went toward Pharaoh, and after tolerating many difficulties, they could meet him. While his entourages and the elect ones were around him, Moses communicated the invitation of Allah to them. Now we are going to see what was their reaction in the face of this divine message.

The Qur’an says:

“So when Moses came to them with Our clear signs, they said: ‘This is nothing but a forged sorcery, and we never heard of it amongst our fathers of old’.”

Alongside of the great miracles of Moses, they betook the same weapon that in the length of history all tyrants and misguided ones used to betake in the face of Divine prophets’ miracles, that is, the weapon of sorcery, because that was extraordinary and this was also a supernatural event, but how one can reconcile these two?

Sorcerers are some deviated and mostly mammonist persons whose foundation of work is an alteration of facts and by this sign they can be recognized, while the invitation of Divine prophets, as well as its content, is a witness upon their miracles.

Moreover, since sorcerers rely on the power of man, their acts are always limited, but the divine prophets, who enjoy of the Power of Allah, have great and unlimited miracles.

The Qur’anic phrase ***/’ayatin bayyinat/*** (***clear signs***), which points to the miracles of Moses (as), is in plural form because besides these two miracles Moses might have shown them other miracles, too, that with the combination of each of these two there would have been many miracles.

The change of his staff into a great snake is a miracle, and its return to the first state is another miracle. Again the brightness of Moses’ hand in a moment is a miracle, and its return to the first state is another miracle.

The usage of the Qur’anic term ***/muftaran/*** (***forged***), derived from /faryah/ in the sense of accusation and slander, is for the sake that they wanted to say that Moses had falsely attributed it to Allah.

They said:

“...we never heard of it amongst our fathers of old,”

though before Moses the invitation of Noah, Abraham, and Yusuf had been heard in that land. It is either because of the long length of time, or for the sake that they wanted to say that their ancestors did not submit to such invitations, too.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 37

وَقَالَ مُوسَى رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَن جَآءَ بِالْهُدَي مِنْ عِندِهِ وَمَن تَكُونُ لَهُ عَاقِبَةُ الدَّارِ إِنَّهُ لاَ يُفْلِحُ الْظَّالِمُونَ

37. "And Moses said: 'My Lord knows best who comes with guidance from unto Him, and whose end will be best in the Hereafter, verily the unjust will not prosper'."

In the previous verse, the entourages of Pharaoh boldly introduced the Divine miracles as sorcery and implicitly said that they had not heard such words in the history of their ancestors.

In this verse, Moses in allusion says that they told lie, because before him there were persons, like Hadrat Yusuf, who had the torch of guidance of their ancestors in hand and had been circulating the religion of Abraham.

And also, with a threatening tone, in answer to them, Moses started speaking, as the verse says:

"And Moses said: 'My Lord knows best who comes with guidance from unto Him, and whose end will be best in the Hereafter..."

It indicates that Allah is well aware of his situation, though they accuse him of telling lie. How is it possible that Allah gives such a supernatural event to a liar who was the cause of His servants' aberration? The best proof of the legitimacy of his invitation is that Allah knows his intention and He has given him this position.

Moreover, a liar can continue his job only for a short time, and at last the curtain will be removed from his deeds. You may wait to see that whose good end and victory will be, and who is the failing one.

This meaning is similar to what has come in Surah TaHa, No. 20, verse 69 which says:

"...and the sorcerer will not be successful wherever he goes'."

This sentence may refer to the situation of the obstinate and arrogant people of Pharaoh, meaning that you have found out the situation of my miracles and the legitimacy of my invitation, but you oppose me unjustly. You should know that you will not win and at last the prosperity will belong to me, not to you.

The application of the Qur'anic phrase ***/'aqibat-ud-dar/*** in the verse may refer to their end in this world, or in the next world, or both of them. The third meaning, of course, seems more comprehensive and more fitting.

The verse continues saying:

"…verily the unjust will not prosper'."

By this polite logical statement, Moses reported them their failure both in this world and the Hereafter.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 38

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَآ أَيُّهَا الْمَلأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُم مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِي فَأَوْقِدْ لِي يَا هامَانُ عَلَي الطِّينِ فَاجْعَل لِي صَرْحاً لَعَلِّي أَطَّلِعُ إِلَي إِلَهِ مُوسَي وإِنِّي لأَظُنُّهُ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ

38. "And Pharaoh said: 'O Chiefs! No god do I know for you but myself; therefore, O' Haman, light me a fire upon the clay, and build for me a tower, so that I may obtain knowledge of Moses' God, and verily I think him to be one of the liars'."

The existence of an arrogant mentality usually hinders the acceptance of the truth. As the verse indicates, Pharaoh said that he knew no god for his people but himself. The arrogant persons impose their beliefs and thoughts upon others and their slogan is that: whatever thing they do not know, then it does not exist.

In this noble verse, we are faced with the ninth scene from this adventurous and instructive story, and it is the scene of making a tower by the command of Pharaoh in order to knock out Moses (as).

We know that one of the customs of the skilful politicians is that whenever an important event occurs which is against their desire, they immediately begin to create a new scene so that it can attract, the attention of people to itself and dissuade their thought from that undesirable event.

It seems that the story of building a great tower had happened after the event of Moses' struggle against sorcerers, since it is understood from Surah Mu'min in the Qur'an that this action was done at the time when the people of Pharaoh were planning to kill Moses (as) and the believer of the people of Pharaoh attempted to defend him; and we know that there was not such a thing existed before the struggle of Moses (as) with the sorcerers, but they were searching about Moses and that how they could beat him by means of the sorcerers.

Since the Qur'an has explained the event of the struggle of Moses against sorcerers in Suras: TaHa, 'A'raf, Yunus, and Ash-Shu'ara', it has relinquished speaking about it again here and it has only referred to the subject of building the tower. This subject has been mentioned merely in this Surah and Surah Mu'min.

However, the news of Moses' victory against sorcerers spread throughout Egypt. The subject of sorcerers' belief in Moses (as) strengthened the matter, too. The stability of the government of Pharaoh

was going to be in danger seriously, and it was very probable that the captured people might awake.

In any rate, the common thought and attention should be deviated from this issue, and there must be provided some mental engagements which, in the meantime, were accompanied with the munificence of the governmental organizations so that it could beguile people.

In this regard, Pharaoh started consulting and, consequently, his thought reached to the thing which is mentioned in the above verse.

It says:

"And Pharaoh said: 'O Chiefs! No god do I know for you but myself..."

Pharaoh implicitly says that it is certain that he is the only god on the earth but, as for the god of heaven, there is no proof available for its existence. Yet, he does not miss caution and begins to search about it.

Then he turned to his minister, Haman, and, addressing him, said:

"...therefore, O' Haman, light me a fire upon the clay..."

He ordered Haman to build a very high tower for him to climb it and get some information about the God of Moses, though it did not seem to him that Moses could be truthful.

The verse says:

"...and build for me a tower, so that I may obtain knowledge of Moses' God, and verily I think him to be one of the liars'."

When the building of the tower was finished, and they were not able to make it higher than that, one day Pharaoh went there with some ceremonies to climb that great tower personally. When he reached the top of the tower, he looked at the sky and observed its scenery like the same form that he used to see it on the level land and he found no change and variation in it.

It is said that he put an arrow in the bow and threw it toward the sky. The arrow struck a bird, or by his own aforetime plot, it returned back while it was bloody.

Pharaoh came down from that tower and told people:

"Go home, and have no anxiety, for I killed Moses' God."[5]

Surely, some of the contemporary simple-minded people of the government believed it and spread its news everywhere. They made a new amusement out of it for deluding people of Egypt.

It is notable that in this saying:

“…No god do I know for you but myself…”

Pharaoh did his utmost satanic deed. He counted his divinity certain and continued that whether there was any god other than him. Then, because of the lack of any proof, he negated it either.

In the third stage, in order to bring forth a proof for the absence of the existence of any other god, he designed the subject of the great tower.

All of these affairs show that he knew the matter well, but in order to beguile the people of Egypt and protecting his own position, he said those words.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 39

وَاسْتَكْبَرَ هُوَ وَجُنُودُهُ فِي الاَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْنَا لاَ يُرْجَعُونَ

39. “And he and his hosts prided in the land without any right, and they thought that they would not be returned unto Us.”

The lack of belief in Resurrection and Reckoning is the ground for formation of arrogance.

In this verse, the Qur’an refers to the arrogance of Pharaoh and his people as well as the lack of their submission in the face of ‘Origin’ and ‘End’. Their crimes originated from the denial of these two principles.

The verse says:

“And he and his hosts prided in the land without any right, and they thought that they would not be returned unto Us.”

A feeble human being who sometimes is not able to send away a mosquito from him, and sometimes an atomic being called microbe may send the strongest man of his members under the ground, how can he introduce himself grand and claim divinity?

A divine tradition indicates that Allah says:

“Majesty is My mantle, and Greatness in My wrapper. Then whoever disputes with Me about each of these two, I will send him into (Hell) Fire.”[6]

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 40

فَأَخَذْنَاهُ وَجُنُودَهُ فَنَبَذْنَاهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الظَّالِمِينَ

40. “So We seized him and his hosts, and We cast them into the sea; behold then how was the end of the unjust.”

In this verse, Pharaoh and his hosts have been likened to a worthless thing which is taken from the ground and is thrown into the sea. This despise is for the sake that all powers are insignificant before the Might and Wrath of Allah.

The Qur’anic word ***/naba□a/*** means: ‘to throw away’, or ‘to discard, something which is worthless’.

And, finally, we may see where the end of pride and arrogance reached. The Qur’an says:

“So We seized him and his hosts, and We cast them into the sea…”

Yes, Allah caused their death by means of what was the essence of their life, and changed Nile, which was the secret of their greatness and power, into a graveyard for them.

Yes, Allah warded off these worthless beings from the society of human beings and wiped out the face of the earth from the dirt of their existence.

At the end of the verse, the Qur’an addresses the Prophet of Islam (S) and says:

“…behold then how was the end of the unjust.”

This look is not done with the apparent eyes, it is done by the eye of the heart; and this meaning does not belong to the yesterday oppressors, because the tyrants of today will have the same fate, too.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verses 41-42

وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَدْعُونَ إِلَي النَّارِ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ لاَ يُنصَرُونَ

وَأَتْبَعْنَاهُمْ فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا لَعْنَةً وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ هُم مِنَ الْمَقْبُوحِينَ

41. “And We appointed them leaders who invite unto the (Hell) Fire and on the Day of Judgment they shall not be helped.”
42. “And in this world, we made a curse to follow them; and on the Day of Judgment they will be of those made to appear hideous.”

This holy verse indicates that Allah set the people of Pharaoh as leaders who invited others to the Hell, and on the Hereafter Day no one will help them.

The verse says:

"And We appointed them leaders who invite unto the* (*Hell*) *Fire and on the Day of Judgment they shall not be helped."

This meaning is a question for some commentators that how it is possible that Allah appoints some people as leaders of falsehood, since His job is to invite to goodness and appointing leaders of the truth, not falsehood.

But this is not a very complicated matter, because: firstly, they are the leading members of the hellish people and when some groups of these people are going towards Hell Fire, they walk in front of them.

It will be in the same manner that they were the leaders of misguidance here in this world, then, they will be also the leaders of hellish people there, because next world is the place of embodiment of this world.

Secondly, it is in fact, the result of their own deeds that they are the leaders of misguidance, and we know that the effect of any cause is under the command of Allah. They paved a way that ended to being the leaders of the misguided ones. This is their position in Hereafter, too.

Again, for more emphasis, the Qur'an illustrates their feature in this world and the next, as follows.

"And in this world, we made a curse to follow them; and on the Day of Judgment they will be of those made to appear hideous."

The curse of Allah is the same as exclusion from His Mercy, and the curse of angels and believers is the curse that they send for them every morning and evening, and every now and then. Sometimes all the unjust and oppressors are involved in a general curse, and sometimes they are cursed particularly, because whoever studies history about their lives will curse them.

However, those who have ugly way of life in this world will have ugly face in the next world.

Here, the Qur'an has divided the leaders into two groups: the leaders of 'light', and the leaders of Fire. In the logic of the Qur'an, we have two kinds of leader.

The leaders who are in front of the pious ones on the path of guidance, as Surah Al-'Anbiya', No. 21, verse 73, concerning some divine prophets, says:

"And We made them leaders guiding* (*the people*) *by Our command, and We revealed to them the doing of good deeds, and the establishing of prayer, and the giving of alms, and they were worshippers of Us* (*alone*)*."

These are the leaders with clear bright programs, because pure Monotheism, invitation to goodness, truth and justice have formed the content of their program. These are the leaders of Light whose manner has been continued by all prophets and their vicegerents up to the Seal of the Prophets (S) and his vicegerents (as).

The second group are the leaders of misguidance, and as the Qur'an introduces them in the verses under discussion, they are the leaders of Fire.

A tradition narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) about the qualities of these two groups of leaders indicates that the first group give priority to the command of Allah rather than the command of people and their own will,[7] and consider His Commandment as the highest ordinances, while the second group give priority to their own command before the command of Allah (s.w.t.) and consider their own command before His commandment.[8]

Thus, by this criterion, the recognition of these two groups of leaders will be very clear.

On the Day of Resurrection when the rows of people will be specified, every group will be at the back of their leader.

The hellish people follow the hellish ones, and the people of light follow the people of light, as the Qur'an says:

***"On the Day We shall call every people with their Imam** (**leader**)..."*[9]

We have repeatedly said that Resurrection is a great embodiment from this small world, and those who have loved a leader and practically followed his way of treatment here, in Hereafter will be on his line, too.

Bushr-ibn-Qalib says that once he asked Hadrat Imam Abu-'Abdillah-il-Husayn (as) about the commentary of the Qur'anic sentence:

***"On the Day We shall call every people with their Imam** (**leader**)..."*[10],

and he (as) answered:

"A leader invites to guidance and a group accept him, and a leader invites to misguidance and a group accept him, too.

The former are in Heaven and the latter are in Hell Fire, and this is the meaning of the word of Allah Who says:

*"...(**When**) **some will be in the Paradise and some in the blazing Fire**[11]."*[12]

It is interesting that Pharaoh who moved in front of his followers and caused them to be drowned in the waves of Nile, on the Hereafter Day he will walk in front of them and will make them enter into the sea of Hell Fire.[13]

We put an end to this discussion with a statement narrated from Hadrat Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as) who said about a group of hypocrites:

*"...they have continued after the holy Prophet. They gained positions with the leaders of misguidance and callers towards Hell through falsehood and slandering. So, they put them in high posts and made them officers over the heads of the people..."*14

1. Surah Taha, No. 20, verse 10
2. 'A'lam-i-Qur'an, P. 409
3. Surah Taha, No. 20, verse 18
4. Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 107, and Surah Ash-Shu'ara, No. 26, verse 32
5. The Commentary of 'Abul-Futuh-i-Razi, Vol. 8, P. 462
6. The Commentary of Ruh-ul-Ma'ani, Tafsir-i-Kabir, and Tafsir-i-Al-Mizan, following the verse.
7. The Commentary by Safi, following the verse
8. Ibid
9. Surah 'Isra', No. 17, verse 71
10. Ibid
11. Surah Ash-Shura, No. 42, verse 7
12. 'Amali by Saduq, narrated by Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 3, P. 192
13. Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 98
14. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, Sermon 210

Section 5: Moses' Mission Referred to

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 43

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَي الْكِتَابَ مِن بَعْدِ مَآ أَهْلَكْنَا الْقُرُونَ الأُولَي بَصَآئِرَ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًي وَرَحْمَةً لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ

43. "And indeed We gave Moses the Book** (**Torah**) **after We had destroyed the earlier generations** (**as a means**) **of insight for mankind and a guidance and mercy that haply they might receive admonition."

The Arabic word /basa'ir/ is the plural form of /basirat/ in the sense of 'insight and awareness', and the word /'absar/ is the plural form of /basar/ which means 'eye'.

A man usually will not be guided unless he obtains /basirat/ (insight and awareness), and he will not be guided unless he receives the favour and grace of Allah.

Religion is inside the nature of human beings, and the Heavenly Books uncover the dust from it.

By this verse, which is the last verse of this section of verses, we reach the tenth scene of the adventurous story of Moses (as). This verse speaks in relation with the revelation of Divine ordinances and Torah, i.e. the period when the 'negation of deity' has finished and the period of construction and

proof begins.

It says:

"And indeed We gave Moses the Book (Torah) after We had destroyed the earlier generations (as a means) of insight for mankind and a guidance and mercy that haply they might receive admonition."

Concerning the objective of the Qur'anic phrase: ***/qurun al 'ula/*** (***the earlier generations who were destroyed***) and that who they are, commentators are divided.

Some of them have said that it refers to the disbelievers among the people of Noah, 'Ad, Thamud, and the like, because, by the past of time, the effects of the former prophets had disappeared and it was necessary that a new Heavenly Book be set at mankind's disposal.

Some other commentators of the Qur'an believe that it refers to the destruction of the people of Pharaoh who were the remaining of the early generations, since Allah gave Torah to Moses (as) after their destruction. But it is no problem that the above-mentioned sentence refers to all of these generations and peoples.

The Qur'anic term ***/basa'ir/***, which is the plural form of /basirat/, means insight and awareness and its objective here is the verses and proofs that caused the hearts of believers to be enlightened, and guidance and mercy are also the concomitants of this 'insight', and there follows it admonition and vigilance of the receptive hearts.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 44

وَمَا كُنتَ بِجَانِبِ الْغَرْبِيِّ إِذْ قَضَيْنَآ إِلَي مُوسَي الأَمْرَ وَمَا كُنتَ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ

44. "And you were not on the western side of (Mount Tur) when We passed to Moses the commandment, and you were not one of the witnesses."

Reiterating the story and adventure of Moses' prophethood with all its qualities from the tongue of a prophet who did not present at those times, is a sign of legitimacy and inimitability of the Qur'an.

Some of the stories of the Qur'an are among the heavenly news, not taken and narrated from eyewitnesses.

Therefore, in this verse the fact is stated, saying that whatever was said about Moses and Pharaoh, with all its details, is a proof for the legitimacy of your Qur'an, because you did not attend in these scenes and did not see these events by your eyes. It was only the Grace of Allah that He sent down these

verses unto you for the guidance of people.

The verse says:

"And you were not on the western side of (Mount Tur) when We passed to Moses the commandment, and you were not one of the witnesses."

It is necessary to note this point that on his way from Madyan to Egypt, which was in the land of Sinai, Moses (as) was going just from East towards West, and, on the contrary, when the Children of Israel came from Egypt towards Syria and passed Sinai, they were coming from West to Egypt. (That is why some of the commentators believe that the sentence:

"Then they (Pharaoh's hosts) pursued them at sunrise", 1

which is about the hosts of Pharaoh in pursuance of the Children of Israel, points to this meaning.)

Finally the author of Atyab-ul-Bayan in the following of the verse says:

"Some Islamic narrations indicate that the objective of executorship has been Yusha'-ibn-Nun- and that every prophet that was sent his executor of testament was appointed by Him and the appointment of executor of testament is in His hand.

That is, you, O' Messenger of Allah, too, should appoint your executor of testament. Some of these narrations denote that the purpose was 'going' toward Pharaoh, but it apparently means if you were there and saw the affairs of Moses and inform them to the Ummat, this would not be a miracle for them.

They would say that he has seen it and informs of it; but now that you inform them of these affairs by means of the Qur'an, this is itself a miracle that without seeing them you inform of Moses' affairs as well as other prophets and their nations.

The Qur'an also informs of the future events because Allah (s.w.t.) has the knowledge of everything from beginning to the end of arriving in Hereafter; and this itself is a great miracle. 2

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 45

وَلَكِنَّآ أَنشَأْنَا قُرُوناً فَتَطَاوَلَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْعُمُرُ وَمَا كُنتَ ثَاوِياً فِي أَهْلِ مَدْيَنَ تَتْلُواْ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَاتِنَا وَلَكِنَّا كُنَّا مُرْسِلِينَ

45. "But We raised up generations and a long time passed upon them, and you were not dwelling among the people of Madyan, reciting unto them Our signs, but We were sending messengers."

The Qur'anic word ***/awiyan/*** is derived from /awi/ which means 'resident', and also the term /mawi/ derived from the same root, means 'abode'.

So, through this holy verse, Allah says:

"But We raised up generations and a long time passed upon them..."

A long time passed and the effects of the prophets as well as their guidance went away from their hearts and thoughts. That was why We brought both you and your Qur'an forth and stated the story life of the old generations in it in order to enlighten mankind.

The verse continues saying:

"...and you were not dwelling among the people of Madyan..."

O Prophet! You were not among the people of Madyan to be acquainted with their signs and the news of their lives so that you can reiterate them for the people of Mecca. But We sent you and gave you these exact news related to thousands years ago in order that you guide them.

The above holy verse continues saying:

"...reciting unto them Our signs, but We were sending messengers."

Of course, the time between the advent of Moses (as) and the advent of the Prophet of Islam (S) lasted about two thousand years.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 46

وَمَا كُنتَ بِجَانِبِ الطُّورِ إِذْ نَادَيْنَا وَلَكِن رَّحْمَةً مِن رَّبِّكَ لِتُنذِرَ قَوْماً مَّآ أَتَاهُم مِن نَّذِيرٍ مِن قَبْلِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ

46. "And you were not on the side of the Mount Tur when We called (unto Moses), but (this revelation is) a mercy from your Lord that you warn a people to whom no warner had come before you, in order that they may receive admonition."

Like other people, the Divine prophets do not know the heavenly news without the contact with the source of Divine revelation.

The Qur'anic news is entirely from the source of Divine revelation.

Again, for emphasis on this very meaning, this holy verse adds:

"And you were not on the side of the Mount Tur when We called (unto Moses)..."

It was that time that Allah (s.w.t.) issued the command of prophethood for Moses.

The Qur'an continues saying:

"...but (this revelation is) a mercy from your Lord that you warn a people to whom no warner had come before you, in order that they may receive admonition."

Shortly speaking, Allah (s.w.t.) reiterated the warnings and awakening events that had occurred in the old nations' time when the Prophet of Islam (S) was not present and did not witness them, so that he would recite them for this misguided people, probably they cause them to awaken.

There arises a question here that how does the Qur'an say that no warner had come for this nation (i.e. the Arabs contemporary with the Prophet (S)), while we know that there comes no time that the earth is empty of a godly Hujjat (proof) and the vicegerents of the prophets had always been present among this nation, too?

In answer, we say that its purpose is to send a prophet who had a heavenly Book and was a clear warner, because it prolonged for centuries between the time of Jesus (as) and the advent of the Prophet of Islam (S) when no arch-prophet came, and this very matter gave a pretext to the atheists and mischief-makers.

In one of his sermons, Ali (as) says:

"Verily Allah sent Muhammad (S) when none among the Arabs read a (heavenly) Book or claimed prophethood. He guided the people till he took them to their (correct) position and reached them their salvation."[3]

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 47

وَلَوْلآَ أَن تُصِيبَهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُوا رَبَّنَا لَوْلآَ أَرْسَلْتَ إِلَيْنَا رَسُولاً فَنَتَّبِعَ ءَايَاتِكَ وَنَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

47. "And were it not that there should befall them a calamity for what their hands have sent before, they would say: 'Our Lord! Why did You not send to us a messenger so that we might follow Your signs and so be of the believers?'"

The previous verse denoted that the purpose of coming prophets was warning and admonition. This verse states another aim of the mission of the Prophet (S) which is to complete the argument and to shut the way of seeking pretext.

Thus, in the verse under discussion, the Qur'an, pointing to the grace given unto the Prophet (S), says:

"And were it not that there should befall them a calamity for what their hands have sent before, they would say: 'Our Lord! Why did You not send to us a messenger so that we might follow Your signs and so be of the believers?'"

In fact, the verse refers to this point that: the path of Truth is clear, and any intellect judges the falseness of paganism and idolatry. The ugliness of a great deal of their vain deeds, like tyrannies and cruelties, belongs to the judgment of intellect, and even without sending prophets in this regard they can be punished.

But, even in this field, upon which the judgment of intellect is clear, Allah sent prophets with heavenly Books and miracles in order to complete the argument and negate any kind of pretexts, so that no one can say their misfortune was because of lacking any leader and if they had divine leader(s) they would not be misguided.

However, this verse is among the verses that have indication to the necessity of Grace through sending prophets.

It shows that Allah's way of treatment is based on this fact that he should not punish any nation for their sins before sending a prophet for them; as Surah An-Nisa', No. 4, verse 165 says:

"(We sent) messengers as givers of glad tidings and as warners, so that people might have no argument against Allah after the (invitations of) the messengers, and Allah is the Mighty, the Wise."

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 48

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِندِنَا قَالُوا لَوْلآ أُوتِيَ مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَي أَوَلَمْ يَكْفُرُوا بِمَآ أُوتِيَ مُوسَي مِن قَبْلُ قَالُوا سِحْرَانِ تَظَاهَرَا وَقَالُوا إِنَّا بِكُلٍّ كَافِرُونَ

48. "But when the truth came to them from Us they said: 'Why has he not been given the like of what was given Moses?' (But) did they not believe also in what Moses was given aforetime? They said: 'A pair of sorceries supporting each other'. And they (also) said: 'Verily we disbelieve in all'."

Magic and sorcery was the most current accusation which prophets were accused of. The enemies confuse the logic and truth in order that they pave the way for their own denial. Therefore, in this holy verse the Qur'an points to their seeking pretexts and implies that, even after sending messengers for them, they did not abandon pretext seeking and continued their deviated way.

It says:

"But when the truth came to them from Us they said: 'Why has he not been given the like of what was given Moses?'..."

They want to say why does not the Messenger of Islam have a staff like what Moses had? Why did he

not have a white Hand? Why does not the sea cleave for him? Why do the enemies not drown? Why and why…?

The Qur'an answers these pretext seekers when it says:

"…(But) did they not believe also in what Moses was given aforetime?…"

Did they not say that these two, Moses and Aaron, were two sorcerers who had exchanged hands with each other to misguide them? And, therefore, they said they disbelieved them. The verse continues stating:

"…They said: 'A pair of sorceries supporting each other'. And they (also) said: 'Verily we disbelieve in all'."

Though customarily there must be said /sahiran/ (sorcerers) in the verse instead of saying /sihran/, it is for the severity of emphasis, because when, in Arabic, it is speaking about a person earnestly, that person is counted as the exact, for example, justice, or injustice, or magic.

It is also probable that the purpose of /sehran/ is the two great miracles of Moses: Rod and White Hand.

If someone says what is the connection of these denials with the pagans of Mecca, and it relates to the people of Pharaoh who were infidels? Its answer is that the purpose of it is that the subject of seeking pretext is not a new thing. All of them are alike and their statement is very similar to that of each other. Their line, method, and program are the same.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 49

قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِكِتَابٍ مِنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ هُوَ أَهْدَي مِنْهُمَآ أَتَّبِعْهُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

49. "Say (O' Apostle Muhammad): 'Bring you then a Book from Allah that gives better guidance than both of them (i.e., Torah and Qur'an), (that) I follow it, if you are truthful'."

Man is surely incapable to bring a book better than the Qur'an and original Torah. The religious leaders must deliver the best speech and the most logical style when confronting the opponents. They must answer the vain sayings of the rejecters with a suitable reply.

Therefore, this verse, addressing the holy Prophet (S), says:

"Say (O' Apostle Muhammad): 'Bring you then a Book from Allah that gives better guidance than both of them (i.e., Torah and Qur'an), (that) I follow it, if you are truthful'."

In other words, they are seeking for a Book of guidance and for miracles. What miracle is greater than

the Qur'an and what guiding Book is better than it? If the Prophet of Islam (S) had not anything other than this Qur'an, it would be enough for proving the legitimacy of his invitation. But they do not seek the Truth; they are a group of pretext seekers.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 50

فإِن لَّمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَكَ فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يَتَّبِعُونَ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنِ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ بِغَيْرِ هُدًى مِنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

50. "But if they do not answer you, then know that they only follow their own low desires, and who is more astray than he who follows his own low desire without any guidance from Allah? Verily Allah does not guide the unjust people."

Wherever there is not any eligibility of accepting guidance, sensuality dominates. The rejecters of the Truth and sensualists are the most misguided people. Thus, the relation between these two is explicitly stated in this verse, and even the most aberrant people are introduced as those who have taken their own sensual desire as their leader and they have never accepted the Divine guidance.

Sensual desire is a thick curtain before the eyes of man's intellect.

Sensual desire attracts the man's attention to a subject so much that he often loses the ability of understanding the facts because the condition of understanding the fact is an absolute submission for realities, leaving any prophecy and attachment, and to be unconditionally submissive unto whatever outwardly exists, whether it is sweet or bitter; it is alongside our innate wishes or opposite of them; it is on the way of our personal interests or against them; but sensual desire is not consistent with these principles.

In this regard, there is a detailed discussion explained when commenting on Surah Al-Furqan, No. 25, verse 43.

It is interesting that through a lot of Islamic narrations, the abovementioned verse has been rendered into those who have not accepted the Divine leaders and have relied only on their own thoughts.[4]

These narrations which have been narrated from Imam Baqir (as), Imam Sadiq (as) and some other Imams (leaders) of right guidance (as) are, in fact, of the kind of clear aspect. In other words, man is in need of Divine guidance.

This guidance sometimes is found in the heavenly Book, sometimes in the person of Prophet (S) and his way of treatment, sometime in his immaculate vicegerents, and sometimes in the logic of intellect and wisdom. The important thing is that man should be on the line of Divine guidance, not on the line of his own sensual desire, so that he can enjoy the rays of this guidance.

1. Surah Ash-Shu'ara', No. 26, verse 60
2. Atyab-ul-Bayan, following the verse
3. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, sermon 33
4. 'Usul-i-Kafi, Basa'ir-ud-Darajat, according to Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 136

Section 6: Guidance From Allah Had Been Continuous

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 51

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ

51. "And We have made the Word to reach them in order that haply they may be admonished."

The Arabic term /wassalna/ is derived from /wasl/ which means 'to relate' and 'to join'. The purpose of this joining is either the continuation of reflections, or harmoniousness and agreement of the matters which are delivered.

One of Allah's ways of treatment is His guidance upon mankind, which does not cease even for a moment.

The noble verse under discussion speaks about the receptive hearts that by hearing these holy verses found the Truth and remained seriously faithful to it and submitted to it heartily; while the dark, ignorant, and zealous hearts did not show the least reaction from them.

The verse says:

"And We have made the Word to reach them in order that haply they may be admonished."

Such as rain, these verses were continuously sent down upon them. These noble verses were in various forms and with different qualities.

They were sometimes with promise of divine rewards, sometimes with warning of Hell Fire, sometimes they were some advices, sometimes they were threats and warnings, sometimes they were accompanied with intellectual reasoning, and sometimes they were about the history of old nations as some useful instructive lessons.

To sum up, it is a complete collection with materials of the same kind which attracts to itself any heart

that has a little receptivity, but the blind hearted ones have not accepted it.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 52

الَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِهِ هُم بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ

52. "Those to when We gave the Book before this (Qur'an), they believe in it."

Occasion of Revelation

Upon the occasion of revelation of these verses, it is narrated from Sa'id-ibn-Habir who said that these verses were sent down about seventy Christian priests whom Najashi sent from Ethiopia to Mecca in order to search. When the Prophet of Islam (S) recited Surah Yasin for them, they shed tears of joy and embraced Islam.[1]

Some other commentators have said that these verses have been sent down in relation to a group of Christians from Najran, (a city in the North of Yemen), who came to the Prophet of Islam (S) and heard the verses of the Qur'an and believed in Islam;[2] while some others believe that they are in relation to Najashi and his companions.[3]

However, these verses are a lively witness to the fact that a group of the learned persons of the People of the Book believed in Islam when they heard the verses of the Qur'an, because it was impossible that the Prophet (S) to say such a thing while no one of the people of the Book had believed in him. If it were so, the pagans of Mecca would immediately reject it and could protest it earnestly.

The Holy Qur'an implies that the People of the Book (from among the Jews and Christians) may believe in the Qur'an because they find it consistent with the signs that they have found in their own heavenly Book.

It says:

"Those to when We gave the Book before this (Qur'an), they believe in it."

It is interesting that these people were a group of the People of the Book, but the verse refers to them as 'the People of the Book' without mentioning any quality. Perhaps it means that the real people of the Book were only those ones who believed, and others were naught.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verses 53-54

وَإِذَا يُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا بِهِ إِنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا مِن قَبْلِهِ مُسْلِمِينَ

أُوْلَئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُم مَرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَيَدْرَءُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ

53. "And when it is recited to them, they say: 'We believe in it, verily it is the truth from our Lord, verily even before it we had surrendered."
54. "These shall be granted their reward twice for that they patiently endured, and avert evil with good, and spend out of the sustenance We have provided them with.

The seekers of the Truth are searching for the Truth and it does not matter for them who says it, what race he is and in what language he speaks.

Of course, if there is receptivity in a person, he may believe in the truth, but if the ground is not prepared, there is no hope of faith even with the continuation of citation of the Qur'an.

That is why the verse says:

"And when it is recited to them, they say: 'We believe in it, verily it is the truth from our Lord..."

Yes, the recitation of these verses was enough for them to affirm it and say:

"We believe in it...".

Then they add that not only today they are surrendered to the Words of the Lord, but also they were Muslims from before.

The verse continues saying:

"...verily even before it we had surrendered."

They implicitly say that they had found out signs of this Prophet (S) in their heavenly Book and loved him. They were expecting him, and as soon as they found him, they took him and accepted him eagerly and heartily.

Then, in the next holy verse, the Qur'an refers to the great reward of this group of truth seekers and says:

"These shall be granted their reward twice for that they patiently endured..."

They will be rewarded once for their belief in their own heavenly Book, to which they were really loyal, and once again for their belief in the Prophet of Islam (S), the promised prophet whom the earlier Books had informed of.

There is also this probability that they will be granted rewards twice, because, as it is understood from the previous verses, they believed in the Prophet of Islam (S) both before his advent and after his advent.

For fulfilling their duty, they showed much patience and perseverance in both stages. Neither the deviated Jews and Christians approved their action, nor the imitation from ancestors and social atmosphere allowed them to leave their former religion. But they stood firm, left their own interests and renounced their sensual desires, and, consequently, they gained the great Divine reward twice.

Then, the Qur'an points to a group of their righteous deeds, each of which is worthier than the other. These actions are 'averting evil with good', 'spending out of the Divine bounties', and 'facing with the ignorant magnificently.' These qualities added to patience and perseverance, mentioned in the former sentence, make four outstanding qualities.

It begins saying:

"...and avert evil with good..."

They avert evils, such as: ugly words with good sayings, the indecency with virtue, the ignorance with knowledge, the enmity and grudge with kindness, and the rupture of relation with friendship and union of kindred. In short, instead of answering vice with vice, they try to repel it with goodness.

This is a very effective style in struggling against mischief, specially against a group of obstinate persons, and the Qur'an has repeatedly emphasized it.[4]

Another thing is that they spend not only out of their property and wealth, but also out of their knowledge, mental power, body strength, and social honour, all of which are sustenance and merits of Allah that they give in the way of Allah.

The verse says:

"...and spend out of the sustenance We have provided them with.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 55

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَقَالُوا لَنَآ أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ سَلاَمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لاَ نَبْتَغِي الْجَاهِلِينَ

55. "And when they hear idle talk, they turn away from it and say: 'We shall have our deeds and you shall have your deeds. Peace be on you, we do not seek the ignorant'."

A real believer is he who not only does not go into a meeting of vanity and does not listen to an idle talk, but also if he heard a vain word, he would react properly.

Turning away from speaking and hearing idle talk and also from seeing and associating with it is a virtue which is praised in all religions. The above verse is about the qualities of a group of the People of the Book.

Therefore, the verse says:

"And when they hear idle talk, they turn away from it..."

They never answer an idle talk with an idle talk, and do not reply ignorance with ignorance, but they tell the talkers of idle as follows:

"...and say: 'We shall have our deeds and you shall have your deeds..."

Neither you will be punished for our deeds, nor we will be punished for your deeds, but soon you will know about the result of the deed of each of us.

Then the Holy Qur'an adds that they say farewell to the ignorant idle talkers, and those who, by some vicious talks, try to hurt the nerves of the faithful and benevolent persons, and their speech is such:

"...Peace be on you, we do not seek the ignorant'."

Neither we are the people of idle talk, ignorance, and mischief, nor we seek them. We seek for clear-minded scholars, the learned men who practice their own knowledge, and true believers.

Thus, instead of wasting their strength and power in struggling against the blind-hearted ignorant and unaware idle talkers, they honourably pass by them and pay to their own fundamental aims and programs.

It is worthy to note that when these believers face with such people, their greeting is not salutation of 'meeting' but it is the salutation of 'farewell'.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 56

إِنَّكَ لاَ تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَن يَشَآءُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

56. "Verily you cannot guide whom you like, but Allah guides whomever He pleases, and He knows best those that are guided."

Divine prophet's duty is conveying the Messages of Allah to people and showing the right way. Whether people accept or not it does not relate to them.

The verse says:

"Verily you cannot guide whom you like..."

Guiding people is the job of Allah which involves only the pure and receptive hearts.

The verse continues saying:

"...but Allah guides whomever He pleases, and He knows best those that are guided."

Regarding the fact that the previous verses referred to two groups of the people of Mecca: the obstinate pagans in whom the light of Faith did not penetrate though the Messenger of Allah (S) tried to guide them.

On the contrary, a group of the People of the Book and those who were in some distance places, accepted the Divine guidance and eagerly tried their best in the way of Islam, and they did not fear of the opposition of their near relatives and the arrogant ignorant pagans.

Keeping these things in mind, the above verse uncovers the curtain from over this fact that the Prophet (S) could not guide whomever he liked, but Allah guides whomever He pleases.

Allah knows those who are eligible to accept Faith. He knows which hearts are eager for the Truth, He knows which minds contain the love of Allah. Yes, He knows these persons well and He gives them success, and endows them His grace so that they be guided towards Faith.

But those dark hearted evil doers who are inwardly enemy of the Truth, and they struggle against the messengers of Allah (as) with all their strength, and, from the point of life, they are so polluted and disdained that are not eligible for the light of Faith, Allah (s.w.t.) does not set the torch of success above their way.

Therefore, the purpose of guidance, here, is not 'showing the way', because showing the way is the main job of the Prophet (S) and he shows the way to everybody unexceptionally, but the purpose of guidance, here, is remittance to that which is sought and causing them to reach the destination.

This is only the job of Allah that He spreads the seed of faith in the hearts, and His deed is not done undue either. He looks at the receptive hearts and cast this heavenly light into them.

However, this verse is a kind of console for the Prophet (S) that he regards this fact that neither the persistence of a group of idolaters of Mecca upon polytheism is undue, nor the sincere faith of the people of Ethiopia, or Najran and the like in becoming Muslim.

He should never be worried of the disbelief of the first group, because this divine light goes only into the receptive hearts, wherever it arrives it erects camp therein.

There are many examples of this meaning found in the verses of the Holy Qur'an.

Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 272 says:

"It is not upon you to guide them (O' Muhammad), but Allah guides aright whomever He wills..."

Surah Yunus, No. 10, verse 43 says:

"And some of them look at you, but can you guide the blind even though they will not see (inwardly)?"

And, in Surah 'Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 4 it says:

"...then Allah leads astray whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases, and He is the Mighty, the Wise."

The last sentence of the recent verse shows that the will of Allah concerning these two groups is not undue, but it is according to His Wisdom and upon the competencies, activities, and efforts of the persons. It is only upon this basis that Allah gives the success of guidance to a group and negates it in another group.

Now pay attention to this matter that the content of this verse, which is a consolation for the Prophet (S), has been repeated in some other verses of the Qur'an with some rather different statements and meanings; including, Surah Yusuf, No. 12, verse 103 that says:

"And most people will not believe, though you desire it."

Or Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 272 says:

"It is not upon you to guide them (O' Muhammad), but Allah guides aright whomever He wills..."

Yet, in the commentary of Durr-ul-Manthur, Vol. 5, as well as some other commentaries, there have been narrated some narrations from Sunnites indicating that when Abutalib, Ali's father, was going to die, the holy Prophet (S) went to him and suggested Islam to him but he did not accept it, and then this verse was revealed.

But apart from the fact that what the occasion of revelation is, or whether it relates to the father of Ali (as) or not, with a little care, the lack of this relation is proved, because the continuation of the verse is about a group of the believers of the People of the Book comparing with the pagans of Mecca.

Now, in order to make the fact clear, we discuss on these narrations and the faith of Hadrat Abutalib.

'Allamah 'Amini, the author of the worthy book of Al-Qadir, in Vol. 8, P. 19 on rejecting all these forged narrations and relying on the historical documents, believes that the narrators of such narrations were either some little infants at the time of the death of Hadrat Abutalib, or, like 'Abu-Hurayrah, had not embraced Islam yet.

Again, in pages 330 to 410 of the same volume, 'Allamah proves that Hadrat Abutalib was a true believer. He narrates hundreds of poems from that Hadrat himself, ten reminiscences and forty traditions from the Ahl-ul-Bayt of the holy Prophet (S) which denote to his belief in Allah and the Messenger of

Allah. Some of these evidences are as:

1- The words of the Prophet (S) and the immaculate Imams (as) about him.

2- The grief and sorrow of the Prophet (S) for Abutalib's death, so grievous that that year was named /'am-ul-huzn/ (The year of grief).

3- The Prophet's invocation (S) on the pulpit for 'Abutalib and attending in his funeral.

4- The Prophet's tradition (S) by which he said he would be the interceder of his parents and his uncle 'Abutalib on the Day of Hereafter.

5- The testament of 'Abutalib in which he supported Bani Hashim and the Prophet of Islam (S).

6- His recommendation to his wife and his son, Ja'far, for supporting the Prophet (S) and to regard Islam and prayer (salat) are some evidences.

7- His abundant supports in regard to the Prophet (S) by the nights of danger when he changed the sleeping place of the Prophet (S) with the sleeping place of his son, Ali (as), and that he exposed his son to danger.

8- The life of Fatimah-Bent-Asad with Abu-Talib, in whose Islam there is no doubt, is an evidence, because if Hadrat 'Abu-Talib were not Muslim, a Muslim woman would surely not be his wife.

9- The existence of a great deal of poems which denote to his confess to Islam. Yet, how ignorance, ingratitude and injustice it is that some people persistently tried to say that this sincere Unitarian believer died in paganism.

Of course, it should not be forgotten that the only his unforgivable sin was that he was Ali's father (as). Ali's enemies spent a great deal of money in the way of striking him. They concocted many false narrations, and in order to set a kind of relation between Abutalib, Ali's father (as), and Abusufyan, the father of Mu'awiyah, they accused Abutalib of paganism.

For more information, you may refer to the commentary books of Shi'ah and the narrations of Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) cited following the abovementioned verse.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 57

وَقَالُوا إِن نَتَّبِعِ الْهُدَي مَعَكَ نُتَخَطَّفْ مِنْ أَرْضِنَآ أَوَلَمْ نُمَكِّن لَهُمْ حَرَماً ءَامِناً يُجْبَي إِلَيْهِ ثَمَرَاتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ رِزْقاً مِن لَدُنَّا
وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ

57. "And they say: 'If we follow the guidance with you, we shall be driven out from our land.' Have

We not settled them in a secure sanctuary to which fruits of everything are drawn, as a provision from Us? But most of them do not know."

A group of the pagans of Mecca once told the Prophet of Islam (S) that if they accepted Islam, very soon they would be sent away from their home and, being homeless, they would be vagrant from their own life and living.

This statement, of course, is uttered by those persons who count the Might of Allah naught and the power of ignorant Arabs great. This statement is uttered by those who are not still acquainted with the depth of favours and helps of Allah and they do not know how He assists His friends and how He causes His enemies to fail.

So, in answer to them, the Qur'an says:

"And they say: 'If we follow the guidance with you, we shall be driven out from our land.' Have We not settled them in a secure sanctuary to which fruits of everything are drawn, as a provision from Us? But most of them do not know."

The Lord Who set a dry saline land, which had no trees and plants, as a secure sanctuary, and attracted the hearts to it so strongly that the best products from different parts of the world are brought towards it, has clearly shown His Power.

The One Who has proved such a Might and has provided security and those abundant bounties in this land and every one sees their effects and have enjoyed of them for many years, how He is not able to protect them from the attack of a group of idolatrous Arabs.

When they were in infidelity, they were enjoying of these two great bounties of Allah: security and the merits of life, how is it possible that Allah deprives them from these bounties after Islam? They must be strong-hearted, stand firm and believe in Islam since the Lord of Ka'bah and Mecca (s.w.t.) is with them.

The Qur'anic term ***/yujba/*** (***are drawn***) is mentioned in the Arabic form of simple present tense. It denotes the continuation of action in both the present and future; and now, after fourteen centuries, we witness the concept of this statement that all kinds of merits are continuously drawn toward this sacred land.

Those who go to Mecca see by their eyes that how this dry, hot, grassless land is full of kinds of the best bounties, so that there may not this affluence, from all points of views, be found so easily in any place of the world.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 58

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَرْيَةٍ بَطِرَتْ مَعِيشَتَهَا فَتِلْكَ مَسَاكِنُهُمْ لَمْ تُسْكَنْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ إِلاَّ قَلِيلاً وَكُنَّا نَحْنُ الْوَارِثِينَ

58. "And how many a town We did destroy which exalted in its means of subsistence; so these are their abodes, they have not been dwelt in after them save a little, and We are their heirs!"

The Arabic word /batira/ means disobedience and inebriate because of abundance of wealth and welfare.

In the previous verse we studied that a group of people told the holy Prophet (S) that if they believed in him, the pagans of Mecca would drive them out from their land, and Allah implicitly said that the same Power that made Mecca a secure place for them with plenty of sustenance, can protect His bounties for them after Faith, too.

Now, in this verse, He implicitly says they should not forget that the people of those cities, that were inebriate with His bounties and full welfare, were destroyed; then they must be aware that they, too, will meet the Wrath of Allah because they do not believe in Islam in order to protect their own properties and welfare.

The verse says:

"And how many a town We did destroy which exalted in its means of subsistence..."

Yes, the affluence and pride of bounties invited them to disobedience, and disobedience became the source of injustice and cruelty, and injustice annihilated the whole their living.

The verse continues saying:

"...so these are their abodes, they have not been dwelt in after them save a little, and We are their heirs!"

Yes, their ruin houses and cities are empty, silent, and ownerless, and if there came some persons into them to live therein they were a few and it was for a short length of time.

O' the pagans of Mecca! Do you also want to have such a comfortable life, under the shadow of infidelity, the end of which is the same thing that was said? What can the worth of it be?

The application of the Arabic term /tilka/, which is a demonstrative pronoun pointing to a far place and is often used for perceptible things, may refer to the land of 'Ad and Thamud and the people of Lot which was not so far from Mecca, viz. in the land of 'Ahqaf (between Yemen and Syria), or in Wad-il-Qura, or in the land of Sadum, all of which were on the way of commercial caravans of Arabs of Mecca to Syria, and those Arabs could see the empty houses of that place with their own eyes and knew that there had dwelt few persons there after them.

The application of the Qur'anic sentence:

"...and We are their heirs"

points to that place being empty, and is an indication to the real ownership of Allah Who is the owner of everything, and if the nominal ownership of some things is temporarily given to some persons, it will not last long and all of them will disappear and their heirs will be Allah.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 59

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ الْقُرَي حَتَّي يَبْعَثَ فِي أُمِّـهَا رَسُولاً يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَاتِنَا وَمَا كُنَّا مُهْلِكِي الْقُرَي إِلاَّ وَأَهْلُهَا ظَالِمُونَ

59. "And your Lord never destroyed the towns until He raised in their centers a messenger, reciting to them Our signs, and We never destroyed the towns except when their people were unjust."

This verse, in fact, is the answer of the probable question saying that: if it is so that Allah (s.w.t.) destroys the disobedient and rebellious ones, then why did He not annihilate by His punishment the pagans of Mecca and Medina who committed the utmost contumacy and there was no ignorance and crime that they did not commit?

The Qur'an says:

"And your Lord never destroyed the towns until He raised in their centers a messenger, reciting to them Our signs,..."

Yes, He will not punish the people of the towns unless He completes the argument and sends messengers with explicit instructions.

Moreover, after completing the argument, He has constant attention to their deeds, and if they commit any injustice or oppression that deserves punishment, He will punish them.

The verse continues saying:

"...and We never destroyed the towns except when their people were unjust."

The application of the Arabic phrases /ma kana rabbuka/ (Your Lord never) and /ma kunna/ (We never) in the verse is an evidence over this fact that it has been the constant and permanent way of treatment of Allah that He never punishes any nation before giving them enough proofs.

The Qur'anic sentence:

"...until He raised in their centers a messenger..."

points to this fact that it is not necessary that He raises a messenger in every town and city. It is enough that a messenger to be raised in a great center where the people of mind and wisdom of a nation are

gathered and the news are quickly scattered from it throughout the province and the people of that locality can get the news they need.

The news of the raise of the Prophet of Islam in the land of Mecca spread throughout Arabia peninsula in a short time, and it went beyond it since Mecca was 'Mother of cities'; it was both the spiritual center of Hijaz (Mecca and Medina) and a commercial center. It reached even the important centers of the civilization of that time during a short period.

Therefore, the verse states a universal and a general principle, and, thus, the belief of some commentators who say it refers to Mecca is completely baseless; and the usage of the Arabic phrase /fi 'ummiha/ (in their centers) is also a general meaning since the Arabic word /'umm/ means 'mother' and 'the main center', and it is not allocated to Mecca.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 60

وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِن شَيْءٍ فَمَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتُهَا وَمَا عِندَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَي أَفَلاَ تَعْقِلُونَ

60. "And whatever things you have been given are only a provision of the life of this world and its adornment, and whatever is with Allah is better and more lasting, have you then no sense?"

Indeed, this is the third answer that Allah (s.w.t.) gives to the infidel pretext seekers of Mecca who used to say if they believed their living would be ruined. This verse implicitly says that whatever they imagine they obtain through disbelief is a worthless perishing thing for the limited life of this world while the things with Allah are better and more lasting.

The verse says:

"And whatever things you have been given are only a provision of the life of this world and its adornment, and whatever is with Allah is better and more lasting..."

All the material bounties of this world generally have some unwholesome sequels mixed with different problems, and there is no material bounty free from harm and difficulty.

In addition, the bounties which are with Allah are permanent and are not comparable with the perishing merits of this world; therefore, they are both better and more lasting.

Thus, with a simple comparison, every rational person can understand that he should not devote that lasting bounty for this mortal one.

That is why, at the end of the verse, He says:

"...have you then no sense?"

Fakhr-i-Razi narrates from one of the jurisprudents who said that if a person makes testament that one third of his wealth must be given to the wisest person among people, his legal opinion was that this one third ought to be given to those who obey the commandment of Allah, because the wisest person among people is the one who gives little (perishing) thing and takes a large (lasting) capital, and this is true only in the obedient persons of the command of Allah.

Then, Fakhr-i-Razi adds that it seems that that jurist has taken this legal injunction from the verse under discussion.5

1. Tafsir-i-Fi Zilal, Vol. 6, PP. 357, 358
2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. There is a detailed explanation in this regard when commenting on Surah Ar-Ra'd, No. 13, verse 22, and Surah Al-Mu'minun, No. 23, verse 96
5. Tafsir-i-Kabir by Fakhr-i-Razi, Vol. 25, P. 6

Section 7: Unity of Allah

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 61

أَفَمَن وَعَدْنَاهُ وَعْداً حَسَناً فَهُوَ لاَقِيهِ كَمَن مَتَّعْنَاهُ مَتَاعَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ هُوَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنَ الْمُحْضَرِينَ

61. "Is he then unto whom We have promised a goodly promise which he shall meet it, similar to him whom We have provided with the provision of the life of this world, then on the Day of Hereafter he shall be of those brought up (for punishment)?"

The promises of Allah are both decisive and certain; and rewards in hereafter are both great and good.

In the previous verses, the words were about the persons who, for the enjoying of the bounties of the world, prefer disbelief to Faith and infidelity to Monotheism. Now, the verse under discussion defines the situation of this group in the Hereafter comparing the true believers.

At first, through a question, the Qur'an wants the conscience of all to judge, when it says:

"Is he then unto whom We have promised a goodly promise which he shall meet it, similar to him whom We have provided with the provision of the life of this world, then on the Day of Hereafter he shall be of those brought up (for punishment)?"

No doubt every vigilant conscience prefers the Divine goodly promises and His great lasting merits to a

few days of enjoying of perishing bounties and fleeting joys which have pain and toil in sequel.

The Qur'anic sentence ***/fahuwa laqiyah/*** (***which he shall meet it***) is an emphasis on the fact that the promise of Allah does not infringe, and it should be such, because to infringe the promise is either because of ignorance or powerlessness, none of which is found in Divine Essence.

The Qur'anic sentence:

"Then on the Day of Hereafter, he shall be of those brought up (***for punishment***)***"***

refers to the calling before Allah (s.w.t.) for the reckoning of deeds. Some commentators have rendered it into calling to the Hell Fire, but the first commentary is more suitable. However, this meaning shows that these polluted persons are drawn to this scene unwillingly, and it must be so, because the horror of reckoning and retribution has covered their whole entity.

The application of the Qur'anic phrase ***/hayat-ud-dunya/ 'life of this world'***, which has repeatedly been mentioned in different Suras of the Qur'an, points the meanness of this mortal life in comparison with the 'Hereafter life' which is permanent and perpetual.

The Arabic word /duniya/ is derived from /dunuw/ which originally means: 'nearness in place, or time, or position'.

Then the terms /duniya/ and /adna/ have sometimes been used for the small creatures which are available, versus huge creatures, and sometimes it has been used for some mean things versus good and exalted things, and sometimes for 'near' versus 'far'.

And, in view of the fact that the life of this world in the face of the life of the next world is both small and worthless, and near, then the appellation of /hayat-ud-duniya/ (the life of this world) is perfectly fitting.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verses 62-64

وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُ أَيْنَ شركَآءِيَ الَّذِينَ كُنتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ

قَالَ الَّذِينَ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ رَبَّنَا هَؤُلَآءِ الَّذِينَ أَغْوَيْنَآ أَغْوَيْنَاهُمْ كَمَا غَوَيْنَا تَبَرَّأْنَآ إِلَيْكَ مَا كَانُوا إِيَّانَا يَعْبُدُونَ

وَقِيلَ ادْعُوا شُرَكَآءَكُمْ فَدَعَوْهُمْ فَلَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَهُمْ وَرَأَوُا الْعَذَابَ لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَهْتَدُونَ

62. "And on the Day (***when***) ***He will call them and say: 'Where are My associates whom you were asserting?'"***

63. "Those against whom the sentence has been confirmed will say: 'Our Lord! These are they whom we led astray; we led them astray, as we were astray ourselves. To You we declare ourselves to be clear* (*of them*)*. They were not unto us worshipping'."
64. "And it will be said* (*unto them*)*: 'Call your associate* (*gods*)*'. So they will call upon them, but they will not answer them, and they will see the punishment and would wish that they had been guided aright."

Whoever calls others towards himself instead of Allah, the punishment of Allah is certain for him. We must not do something that we remain unable to answer for that thing on the Day of Hereafter.

Through these verses, the Qur'an illustrates the scenes of Resurrection for pagans in a way that its consideration brings horror and causes man's body to shake.

The verse says:

"And on the Day* (*when*) *He will call them and say: 'Where are My associates whom you were asserting?'"

It is evident that this question is an objurgatory question, for on the Hereafter Day, when the curtains will be removed and everything is manifest, neither paganism is meaningful nor pagans have remained on their belief. So, this question is only a kind of reproach and punishment, or a kind of reprimand and retribution.

But instead of pagans, that must answer this question themselves, their objects of worship will start speaking and express their hatred from them. We know that their objects of worship were sometimes idols made of stone and wood, and sometimes some sacred beings such as angels and Jesus Christ, and sometimes Jinns and Satans.

Here, the third group will speak who will be referred to in this verse, which says:

"Those against whom the sentence has been confirmed will say: 'Our Lord! These are they whom we led astray; we led them astray, as we were astray ourselves. To You we declare ourselves to be clear* (*of them*)*. They were not unto us worshipping'."

The abovementioned verse is similar to Surah Yunus, No. 10, verse 28 which says:

"...and their associates shall say: 'It was not us* (*indeed*) *that you used to worship'."

Thus, the seductive objects of worship, such as: Pharaoh, Namrud, and Satans and Jinns will proclaim their hatred from such worshippers and defend themselves. They will also negate even aberration from themselves and implicitly say that the worshippers followed them with their own accord.

But it is clear that neither this negation has any effect nor that hatred and repudiation are useful, and

they will surely share the sin of their worshippers.

It is worthy to note that on that Day every one of these sinful deviated persons will repudiate the other one and each of them try to put his own sin on another's shoulder.

This is just like the thing we see its small example in this world with our own eyes. A group of persons gather with together to commit a crime. Then, after being captured, and attending in the court, they hate each other and try to put the fault on the neck of another one. This is the fate of the criminals and astray ones in this world and the next.

Also, Surah 'Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 22 indicates that, on the Day of Hereafter, Satan will say to his followers as follows:

"...and I did not have any authority over you except that I called you and you responded me. Therefore, do not blame me, but blame yourselves..."

Concerning pagans, in Surah As-Saffat, No. 37, we recite that they will conflict with each other and every one will count another a guilty one, but those whose work is temptation will explicitly reply them:

"Nor had we any authority over you. Nay, it was you who were a people in obstinate rebellion!"[1]

However, after that they will be questioned about their objects of worship and they will remain impotent to answer.

Their situation is explained as follows:

"And it will be said (unto them): 'Call your associate (gods)'..."

They are told to call their gods to help them but they, who know their objects of worship cannot do anything there, as a result of the intense horror and that they find nothing to help them, or because of obeying the command of Allah, Who wants to disgrace such pagans and their astray objects of worship before the public, they will go to their gods and ask them to help them, but it is clear that they will not answer them.

At this time, they will see the chastisement of Allah by their own eyes, and they gain nothing but failure and disgrace, because the only way of salvation is Faith and righteous deed which they do not have.

The verse says:

"...So they will call upon them, but they will not answer them, and they will see the punishment and would wish that they had been guided aright."

Surah Al-Qasas - Verses 65-67

وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَآ أَجَبْتُمُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

فَعَمِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الاَنْبَآءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَهُمْ لاَ يَتَسَآءَلُونَ

فَأَمَّا مَن تَابَ وءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحاً فَعَسَي أَن يَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُفْلِحِينَ

65. "And on that Day He will call them and say: 'What was the answer you gave to the messengers?'"
66. "On that Day (all) tidings will be dimmed for them, nor will they ask each other."
67. "But any that (in this life) repents, and believes, and works righteousness, haply he shall be one of the prosperous ones."

Every body is responsible before the call and invitation of the Divine prophets.

On the Hereafter Day, people cannot prepare any answer for the just court of Allah (s.w.t.) by means of cooperation, consultation and asking questions from each other.

Next to the question about their objects of worship, the pagans will be asked another question about their reaction before the Divine prophets.

The verse says:

"And on that Day He will call them and say: 'What was the answer you gave to the messengers?'"

It is certain that, like the first question, they will not have any answer for this question. If they say that they answered their invitation, it will be a lie, and a lie will have no room there.

If they say that they rejected the prophets, denigrated them, called them sorcerers and insane ones, and struggled against them with weapons and killed both them and their followers, their statement will be the cause of their disgrace and misery.

On the Hereafter Day, when the prophets will be questioned that what people did in answer to their invitation and they will answer:

"...'We have no knowledge, verily You are the All-knowing of the Unseen'.",

what can these blind-hearted pagans say in answer to this question?

Therefore, in the next verse the Qur'an implicitly says that they will have no answer to deliver, nor can they hear any answer from each other.

The verse says:

***"On that Day** (**all tidings will be dimmed for them, nor will they ask each other.**"*

It is worthy to note that, in the above verse, blindness and dumbness are attributed to 'tidings' not to them. It does not say that they will become blind, but it implies that all tidings will be blind to find them.

The reason is that many times it happens that a person is not aware of something but it seems that the news turns round by tongues and finally comes to him, as many social news are scattered through this very way where neither are persons aware of them, nor are the news worthy of being scattered.

Thus, all tidings will be covered for them, and they will find no answer for the question that what they answered to the Divine prophets and, therefore, there will remain an absolute silence for them as an answer.

And, since the Qur'an always leaves the door open for the sinners and pagans to return to the truth in what stage of mischief and pollution they may be, by the next verse it adds:

"But any that** (**in this life**) **repents, and believes, and works righteousness, haply he shall be one of the prosperous ones."

Therefore, the way of felicity is summed up in three phrases: returning to Allah, Faith and righteous deeds in this world the result of which will certainly be: deliverance, salvation and prosperity.

Though whoever has true Faith and righteous deed will surely be prosperous, the usage of the word /'asa/ (haply) in the verse may be for the sake that this prosperity is conditioned to the existence and continuation of this state, and since the existence and continuation of this state is not certain for all the repentant, the word 'haply' has been used for it.

Some commentators have also said that when this word, haply, is said by a generous personality, its concept is the certainty of the matter, and Allah is 'The Most Generous'.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verses 68-70

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ وَيَخْتَارُ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَتَعَالَي عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

وَرَبُّكَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ

وَهُوَ اللَّهُ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ هُوَ لَهُ الْحَمْدُ فِي الأُولَي وَالآخِرَةِ وَلَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

68. "And your Lord creates whatever He pleases, and He chooses: They have not the choice. Glory be to Allah, and exalted be He above what they associate (with Him)!"
69. "And your Lord knows what their breasts conceal and what they manifest."
70. "And He is Allah, there is no god but He! His is all praise in this (life) and the Hereafter, and His is the authority, and unto Him you shall be returned."

The Absolute Power is Allah's, and then the creation of existence and the law of life (religion) both belong to Him. Therefore, the choice of heavenly leader is in the hand of Allah, not in the authority of people.

These verses, in fact, are as an evidence for the negation of polytheism and falseness of the belief of polytheists.

The first verse says:

"And your Lord creates whatever He pleases..."

Creation belongs to Him, and administration, authority, and choice are also under His will and commandment.

The verse continues saying:

"...and He chooses: They have not the choice..."

The authority of creation is with Him, the authority of intercession is in His hand, and the authority of sending prophets is also in His will. Shortly speaking, the authority of all things depends on the Divine providence, His Pure Essence. Therefore, neither can idols do anything, nor even can the angels and prophets, save with His leave.

However, Allah is the possessor of authority both in natural affairs and religious affairs, both of which originate from the rank of His creation.

Yet, how do they pave the path of polytheism, and how do they go towards other than Allah?

Thus, at the end of the verse, the Holy Qur'an says:

"...Glory be to Allah, and exalted be He above what they associate (with Him)!"

In the narrations of Ahl-ul-Bayt (as), the above verse has been rendered into the authority and choice of Immaculate Imam (as) from the side of Allah, and the Qur'anic sentence:

"They have not the choice"

has also been adapted to this very meaning. This, in fact, is of the kind of stating the clear example, because protecting divine religion and choosing the immaculate leader for this aim is impossible but from the side of Allah.[2]

The next verse, which is about the vast knowledge of Allah, is, indeed, an emphasis, or a reason, upon what was stated in the previous verse concerning the vast authority of Allah.

It says:

"And your Lord knows what their breasts conceal and what they manifest."

This His sovereignty over everything is a reason for His authority unto all things, and, in the meantime, it is a threat for the pagans who should not imagine that Allah is not aware of their intentions and plots.

The last verse of the abovementioned verses is, in fact, as a conclusion and explanation for the previous verses in the field of negation of polytheism. It points to four qualities of the Attributes of Allah, all of which are derivatives of His creative power and His Will being independent.

It says:

"And He is Allah, there is no god but He!..."

How can an object of worship, except Him, be found while He is the only creator and all authorities belong to Him? Those who, as a pretext of intercession and the like of it, go to idols are seriously in error.

Another thing is that all bounties, whether in this world and the next, are from His side, and this is the requisite of His absolute creative Power.

Therefore, it says:

"...His is all praise in this (life) and the Hereafter..."

The third is that He is the Judge in both worlds. The verse continues saying:

"...and His is the authority..."

The fourth is that the return of all men, for reckoning and receiving rewards and retribution, will be to Him.

The verse says:

"...and unto Him you shall be returned."

It is He Who has created us, and it is He Who is aware of our deeds, and it is He Who is the Judge of

the Day of retribution; therefore the reckoning and reward of our deeds are in His hand, too.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 71

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِن جَعَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ اللَّيْلَ سَرْمَداً إِلَي يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَنْ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُم بِضِيَآءٍ أَفَلاَ تَسْمَعُونَ

71. "Say: 'Have you thought, if Allah made the night everlasting for you till the Day of Resurrection, what god other than Allah shall bring you illumination? Will you not hear?"

The Arabic word /sarmad/, mentioned in this verse, means permanent and perpetual.

Among the ways of knowing Allah there is the way of contemplation about extinction or change of bounties. The change of day and night, of course, is one of the greatest Divine bounties and signs.

The verse under discussion points to a great part of Divine bounties, which is both a reason on Monotheism and negation of polytheism.

From this point of view, it completes the previous discussion, and it is an example of the bounties of Allah for which He is eligible of being praised and glorified, a praise that was pointed out in the previous verses. It is also the evidence on His authority in the system of creation and administration of this world.

At first, it points to the great bounty of the light of the day, which is the cause of any movement.

It says:

"Say: 'Have you thought, if Allah made the night everlasting for you till the Day of Resurrection, what god other than Allah shall bring you illumination? Will you not hear?"

Here, the word /diya'/ (light) has been used, because the main purpose of 'day' is 'light', the same light that the life and living of all living beings depends on it. If there were not the sunlight, neither would a tree grow, nor could a flower smile, nor might a bird fly, nor would exist a human being, nor would it rain a drop of rain.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 72

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِن جَعَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ النَّهَارَ سَرْمَداً إِلَي يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَنْ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُم بِلَيْلٍ تَسْكُنُونَ فِيهِ أَفَلاَ تُبْصِرُونَ

72. "Say: 'Have you thought, if Allah made the day everlasting for you till the Day of Resurrection, what god other than Allah shall bring you the night in which you rest? Do you not then see?"

The existing system of the world of existence is arranged from the side of Allah, and if He wills He can

change it to another system, because the power of Allah is the same unto all beings.

This verse refers to the bounty of darkness. It, addressing the Prophet (S), commands him to tell the people of Mecca who were busy worshipping idols:

"Say: 'Have you thought, if Allah made the day everlasting for you till the Day of Resurrection, what god other than Allah shall bring you the night in which you rest?..."

It is evident that they are not able to answer this question except that they say there is not anyone to do it. Consequently, the argument is completed to them and they must confess that there is not anyone eligible for being worshipped but Allah, the One.

Therefore, it says:

"...Do you not then see?"

That is, do you not obtain knowledge by the way of insight? Do you not observe the day and the night, and do you not contemplate about them so that you know that they both are from the side of a Wise Administrator?

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 73

وَمِن رَحْمَتِهِ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لِتَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِن فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

73. "And it is out of His Mercy that He has made for you the night and the day, that you may rest therein, and that you may seek of His grace, and that you may give thank."

In the verses of the holy Qur'an, the word 'night' is always mentioned before the word 'day'. It may be for the reason that the darkness of the night substantially belongs to the earth and it is from the earth itself, but the light of the day is from the sun which comes to the earth.

This verse, which is, in fact, the conclusion of the previous two verses, says:

"And it is out of His Mercy that He has made for you the night and the day, that you may rest therein, and that you may seek of His grace, and that you may give thank."

Yes, the vastness of the expanse of Allah's Mercy requires that He provides all the means of your life. From one side, we need to work, struggle, and run, which is not possible without the light of the day; and from another side, we need to rest and to have tranquility, which naturally does not complete without the darkness of the night.

Today, it has scientifically been proved that, because of light, all organs of the body of man become

active and alive, such as: circulation of the blood, respiratory organs, the work of the heart, as well as other organs.

And if light is too much, the cells will become tired and joy and cheerfulness gives its place to weariness. On the contrary, at night, the organs of the body go into a deep tranquility and rest, and get strength and joy by it.

It is interesting that when in verse 71 it speaks of the lasting night, at the end of verse it says:

"...will you not hear"

while at the end of verse 72 it says:

"Do you not then see?"

This variation of meaning may be for the reason that the sense proportional to night is hearing and the sense proportional to day is sight. To this extreme the Qur'an uses exactness and precision.

This is also noteworthy that at the end of this verse the subject of thanksgiving is mentioned; giving thank for the accurate system of light and darkness, a thanksgiving that causes man to know the Benefactor, and a thanksgiving which is the motive of Faith in the doctrinal subjects.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 74

وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُ أَيْنَ شُرَكَآءِيَ الَّذِينَ كُنتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ

74. "And on the day when He shall call them and say: 'Where are My partners whom you used to assert?'"

Allah, the Almighty, has no partner. Whatever is counted as a partner for Him, is naught but an imagination and unfounded assumption. Therefore, those who associate anything with Allah (s.w.t.) must prepare themselves to have an answer on the Day of Hereafter.

The commentary of this verse, of course, was explained formerly and its repetition is for the sake that in the first time the aim was that they would confess their aberration, and here the aim is that they might be made understand that they are unable to bring any reasoning.

Thus, Hereafter is the Day when the futility of the objects of worship and frustration of polytheists will appear. It is a Day when all objects of worship in their vanity and all polytheists in their being unable to give answer are equal.

However, it is cited in the commentary of Jawami'-ul-Jami'that Allah, the Glorified, repeats the scorn of

pagans for their disbelief in order to claim that paganism causes the Wrath of Allah more than any other sin, as Monotheism is the most inclusive thing for gaining the consent and pleasure of Allah.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 75

وَنَزَعْنَا مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيداً فَقُلْنَا هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ فَعَلِمُوا أَنَّ الْحَقَّ لِلَّهِ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ

75. "And We will draw forth from every nation a witness, and say: 'Bring you your proof!' Then shall they know that the Truth is Allah's, and that which they used to forge shall depart from them."

Pagans have not any logic and demonstrative proof.

On the Day of Hereafter, the witnesses come out from their own nations. On that Day, the sinful persons will think of denying their crimes, but the existence of witnesses cause them not to do anything.

So, this verse says:

"And We will draw forth from every nation a witness, and say: 'Bring you your proof!'..."

It is at this time that everything will be manifested, and as the verse says:

"...Then shall they know that the Truth is Allah's, and that which they used to forge shall depart from them."

According to some other verses of the Holy Qur'an, these witnesses will be the Divine prophets, and every prophet is the witness of his own nation, while the Prophet of Islam (S), who is the seal of the prophets, will be a witness over all prophets and nations, as Surah An-Nisa', No. 4, verse 41 says:

"How will it be, then, when We bring from every people a witness and We bring you a witness over those (witnesses)?"

Thus, there will be held a meeting at the presence of prophets and Messengers. In this great meeting, those blind-hearted arrogant pagans will be put under judgment. It is at that time that they will be acquainted with the depth of the calamity of paganism and will understand the rightfulness of the Lord and futility of the idols clearly.

It is interesting that the Qur'an in the above mentioned verse says:

"...and that which they used to forge shall depart from them."

That is, their baseless imaginations about idols will completely be dismissed from their minds, because resurrection plain is the place of Truth and there is no room for falsehood there. In that place, falsehood

will be lost and disappear.

If in this world falsehood hides itself under the curtain of truth and is busy with deceit for a few days, in Hereafter the curtains of deceit and trick will disappear and there will remain nothing but the Truth.

Upon the commentary of the Qur'anic sentence:

"And We will draw forth from every nation a witness…"

Imam Baqir (as) in a tradition has said:

"And from this nation there will also be chosen its Imam."[3]

This noble statement refers to this fact that in any age there will be necessary to exist an immaculate witness, and the abovementioned tradition is of the kind of statement of the extension of this meaning.

1. Surah As-Safat, No. 37, verse 30
2. According to Tafsir-i-Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 136
3. The Commentary of Al-Mizan, Vol. 16, P. 20

Section 8: Korah's (Qarun) Ruin

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 76

إِنَّ قَارُونَ كَانَ مِن قَوْمِ مُوسَي فَبَغَي عَلَيْهِمْ وءَاتَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْكُنُوزِ مَآ إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُ لَتَنُوأُ بِالْعُصْبَةِ أُوْلِي الْقُوَّةِ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ
قَوْمُهُ لا تَفْرَحْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِينَ

76. "Verily Korah was of the people of Moses, but he oppressed them; and We had given him of the treasures so much that its keys would have been a burden to a company of men endowed with strength. Once his people said to him: 'Do not exult, for Allah does not love the exultant'."

Mentioning the historical examples is a gazing-stock for the coming generations.

Having a good background is not a proof for being good in the future or renunciation of the present deviations.

The wonderful story life of Moses and his struggle against Pharaoh was explained in a part of former verses of this Surah, and what had to be said about them was stated sufficiently.

In another part of the verses of this Surah, the struggle of the Children of Israel against a rich arrogant

man among them called Korah is referred to. He was a wealthy man who was the manifestation of wealth accompanied with pride, deceit, and contumacy.

In principle, during his lifetime, Moses struggled against three important oppressive tyrannical powers: Pharaoh, who was the sample of governmental power, Korah, who was the manifestation of wealth, and Sameri, who was the example of art, deceit, and elusion.

Although the most important struggle of Moses (as) was against the governmental power, the recent two struggles have importance for themselves and contain some great instructive lessons.

It is said that Korah was a close relative of Moses (as), (his cousin (son of a paternal uncle), or uncle, or son of his maternal aunt); and, from the point of information, he had a considerable knowledge about the matters of Torah.

At first he was one of the believers, but, later, pride and wealth drew him towards disbelief and sent him into the depth of the ground, made him fight against the messenger of Allah, and his amazing death became a lesson for all. The explanation of this event will be discussed later in the concerning verse.

The Qur'an says:

"Verily Korah was of the people of Moses, but he oppressed them..."

The cause of this oppression and disobedience was that he had obtained a great deal of wealth, and since he had not enough capacity and strong faith, this abundant wealth deceived him and drew him towards deviation and arrogance.

The Qur'an continues saying:

"...and We had given him of the treasures so much that its keys would have been a burden to a company of men endowed with strength..."

The Arabic word /mafatih/ is the plural form of /maftah/ in the sense of 'a place wherein something is stored', like the chests that properties are stored up in them.

Thus, the concept of the verse is that Korah had so much gold, silver and precious properties that a group of strong men could move its box with difficulty.

And, regarding that the Arabic word /'usbah/ means a body of men (from ten to forty) who are with together and are strong enough and they have held each other like nerves, makes it clear that how heavy the jewels and precious properties of Korah had been.

The term /tanu'/ is derived from /nu'/ which means: to raise with difficulty and heavily, and it is used for a heavy burden that when a man is carrying it, because of heaviness, it causes him to sway this side and that side.

What was said in the above about the Arabic term /mafatih/ is something that a very large group of commentators and lexicologists have accepted, while some other commentators have said that the term /mafatih/ is the plural form of /miftah/ which means key. They say that the keys of the treasures of Korah were so heavy that several strong men could carry them with difficulty.

Those who have chosen this meaning have got in trouble to themselves to adjust it that how it is possible to be so many keys of treasures, and, however, the first commentary is more clear and more correct.

Now, it is better to see what the Children of Israel told Korah. The Holy Qur'an implicitly says: remember when his people told him not to have so much joy flourished with pride, negligence and arrogance, because Allah does not like the proud exultant.

The verse says:

"...Once his people said to him: 'Do not exult, for Allah does not love the exultant'."

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 77

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَآ ءَاتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الآخِرَةَ وَلا تَنسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِن كَمَآ أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِي الأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

77. "And seek by means of what Allah has given you, the abode of the Hereafter, and do not forget your portion in this world, and be good (to others) just as Allah has been good to you, and do not seek to make mischief in the land, verily Allah does not love the mischief-makers."

Every body ought to suffice to his own share in this world and let the rest for Hereafter. Wealth and property can become a means for the prosperity in Hereafter.

In this verse, next to the advice mentioned in the previous holy verse, there are four other expressive and instructive exhortations here for Korah which form a complete five-ring collection.

At first, it says:

"And seek by means of what Allah has given you, the abode of the Hereafter..."

It points to the fact that, in spite of the imagination of some ill-disposed persons, wealth and property is not a bad thing; the important thing is that we must see in which way it is used. If it is applied in the way of seeking the good abode of the Hereafter, what is better than that? If it is a mean of pride, negligence, injustice, oppression, and sensuality, what, then, can be worse than it?

This is the same logic that Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali's famous sentence reminds about the world.

He said:

"...If one sees through it (the world), it would bestow him sight, but if one has his eye on it, it would blind him." [1]

And Korah was a person who had the power of performing a lot of social good affairs with those abundant properties he had; what was use of it when his pride did not let him see the facts?

By the second advice, it is added that he should decrease his portion from this world: the verse says:

"...and do not forget your portion in this world..."

This is a fact that every person has a proper limit share of this world, viz., the amount of properties he uses for his body, clothing, and residence is a definite amount, and the additional ones are never consumed by him; therefore, one must not forget this fact.

How much food can a person eat? How many pieces of clothing can he wear? How many houses and how many cars can he have? And how many shrouds does he take with him when he dies? The rest, however, is the share of others and man is the depositary of them.

How nice Hadrat Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as) stated when he said:

"O' son of Adam! Whatever you earn beyond your basic needs you will only keep vigil over it for others." [2]

There is another interpretation upon the abovementioned sentence cited in Islamic narrations and the statements of the commentators which adapts to the above interpretation and, perhaps, both of them are its purpose.

It is that Ma'any-ul-'Akhbar, narrates from Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as) who upon the commentary of the Qur'anic sentence:

"...do not forget your portion in this world..."

said:

"Do not forget your health and strength, and your opportunity, and your youth, and your mirth, and by means of these (five bounties) seek out the Hereafter." [3]

According to this commentary of the holy verse, the abovementioned statement is a warning to all human beings that they should not lose the opportunities and capitals, because they pass on like cloud.

The third advice is as follows:

"...and be good (to others) just as Allah has been good to you..."

This is also a fact that one must always expect the good of Allah and ask for any kind of goodness and all kinds of expectation from Him. In this condition, how can he ignore the explicit demand of others and pass by all of these clear things inattentively?

In other words, as Allah has bestowed them to you, you ought to bestow (some of them) to others. A similar meaning to this is mentioned in Surah An-Nur, No. 24, verse 22 in connection with forgiveness and remittal.

It says:

"...And they should pardon and overlook. Do you not like that Allah should forgive you?..."

This sentence can be rendered like this that sometimes Allah gives man some great bounties so that he does not need them all in his personal life. Allah gives him a powerful wisdom which is useful not only for running a person but also for running a country.

He gives him knowledge that not only an individual but also a society can take benefit from it. He gives him a wealth which is appropriate for great social programs.

The implication of these kinds of Divine merits is that the totality of them does not belong to you, but you are the agent of Allah in giving them to others. Allah has bestowed this merit on you that He manages His servants by your hand.

Finally, the fourth advice is as follows:

"...and do not seek to make mischief in the land, verily Allah does not love the mischief-makers."

This is also a fact that many of the faithless rich people, sometimes as the result of the madness of avariciousness and sometimes because of self-superiority, commit mischief and draw the society into deprivation and poverty.

They usually take everything in their own authority. They wish people to be some servants and slaves for them, and whoever protests they try to destroy him, and if they cannot, they desert him through slander by means of their secret agents. Thus, they draw the society towards corruption and decadence.

Now it is understood that these advisers tried, at first, to break the pride of Korah.

In the second stage, they warned him that the world is a means, not an aim.

In the third stage, they warned him that he could use only a small part of what he had.

In the fourth stage, they reminded him this fact that he should not forget Allah had been good to him, then he had to be good to others either, else his merits would be taken from him.

In the fifth stage, they told him to avoid making mischief in the earth, which is the direct result of former four principles.

It is not completely definite that who these exhorters were but it is certain that they were some knowledgeable, pious, aware, exact, and brave men.

Some commentators have thought that probably Moses (as) himself did it but it is very improbable, because the Qur'an in previous verse says:

"…When his people said to him…".

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 78

قَالَ إِنَّمَآ أُوتِيتُهُ عَلَي عِلْمٍ عِندِي أَوَلَمْ يَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَهْلَكَ مِن قَبْلِهِ مِنَ الْقُرُونِ مَنْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ قُوَّةً وَأَكْثَرُ جَمْعاً وَلا يُسْأَلُ عَن ذُنُوبِهِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ

78. "Said he (Korah): 'I have been given this (wealth) only because of a knowledge that is in me.' Did he not know that Allah had destroyed before him of the generations that were mightier in strength than he and greater in amassing (wealth)? And (then even) the guilty shall not be asked about their sins."

To boast for one's knowledge is a manner of people like Korah.

The pride for having knowledge changes man so selfish that he accepts the function of no one and nothing any more:

"…'I have been given this (wealth) only because of a knowledge that is in me'…"

We must think of wealth and power as Divine bounties, not the fruit of our own knowledge and effort.

With that very state of pride and haughtiness, which originates from his abundant wealth, Korah used to say as the Qur'an announces:

"Said he (Korah): 'I have been given this (wealth) only because of a knowledge that is in me.'…"

Korah used to say implicitly that it was not their business that what he did with his wealth. He said he did not need any one to guide him how to use his wealth, because he himself obtained it with his own knowledge and awareness.

Moreover, Korah implicitly added that certainly Allah knew him eligible of having wealth that He had given it to him and He had also taught him the way of using it. Then, he said, he knew better than others what to do, and it was not necessary that they interfere in his affairs.

Besides all of these, I have taken trouble, tolerated pains, and was deeply afflicted in order to gather this wealth; why do they not also take trouble if they have eligibility and ability? I am not bothering them; and if they are poor, it is the better that they remain hungry until they die.

These are the decade and disgrace logics that many faithless wealthy people often express in reply to those who advise them.

This point is also worthy noting that the Qur'an has left this matter secret that in obtaining this wealth to which knowledge of his does Korah emphasize?

Is it the knowledge of alchemy, as some commentators have said?

Is it the knowledge of commerce, agriculture, and the arts of industry?

Or is it his special administration by which he could obtain that enormous wealth? Or it refers to all of them?

It is not improbable that the verse has a vast meaning and encompasses all of these things.

(It is not known, of course, that the knowledge of alchemy, the knowledge by which gold is made from copper and the like, is a fable or a reality.)

Here, the Qur'an gives a harsh answer to Korah and others like him.

It says:

"...Did he not know that Allah had destroyed before him of the generations that were mightier in strength than he and greater in amassing (wealth)?..."

Korah says that whatever he has is by means of knowledge, but he has forgotten that there were many persons who were more knowledgeable, stronger and wealthier than him while they could not escape from the punishment of Allah.

The fair- minded ones of the Children of Israel had told Korah that it was Allah Who had given him that wealth but this impolite and bold man answered them:

"...'I have been given this (wealth) only because of a knowledge that is in me'...",

while Allah, in the above verse, manifests his strength in the fact of His Will.

At the end of the verse, he is warned again by a very short sentence, where it says:

"...And (then even) the guilty shall not be asked about their sins."

In principle, there will not be any time for asking and answering. It is a decisive, painful, violent and

sudden divine punishment.

That is, today the aware men of the Children of Israel advise Korah and give him respite to contemplate and give answer, but when the argument is completed and the Divine punishment comes, surely there will not be any respite for contemplation or uttering some vain and haughty words. As soon as the Divine punishment comes, they will be destroyed.

There will arise a question here inquiring that what is the objective of the question that the guilty are negated from? Is it in this world or in the next world?

Some of the commentators have chosen the first one while some others have taken the second, and there is no matter that both of them to be the objective of it; i.e. neither they will be asked in the world at the time of sudden punishment so that they bring some excuses and count them faultless, nor in the Hereafter, because in that place everything is manifest and as the Qur'an says:

"The guilty ones shall be recognized by their marks…"[4]

Thus the verse under discussion is consistent with the verse which says:

"And on that Day neither man nor jinn shall be asked about his sin."[5]

There comes forth another question here which is not consistent with the holy verse that says:

"So, by your Lord, We shall surely question them all (***in the Hereafter***)***,"***[6]

This question can also be answered in two forms: the first is that there are different places of standing in the Hereafter. In some of them the guilty are questioned while in some others every thing is clear and there is no need of questioning.

Another thing is that question is of two kinds: the question of investigation, and the question of blame. In the Hereafter there is no need of 'the question of investigation', because all things are manifest, but the reproach question is found there and this is a kind of punishment for the guilty.

It is just like the question that the father asks from his degenerate son and says:

"Did I not serve you so much? And was the recompense of those service treachery and corruption?"

(While both of them are aware of the affairs and the purpose of the father is to blame the son.)

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 79

فَخَرَجَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ فِي زِينَتِهِ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا يَالَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَآ أُوتِيَ قَارُونُ إِنَّهُ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ

79. "So he went forth unto his people in his adornment. Those who aspired for the life of this world said: 'We wish we had like what Korah has been given! Verily he owns a great fortune'."

When the power and wealth are in the hand of some negligent persons and they are the cause of boasting, gaudiness, and luxury; and showing the wealth and property to others boastingly, this manner is one of the qualities of Korah.

The boastful wealthy persons usually afflict with kinds of madness, one branch of which is 'the madness of exhibiting wealth'. They take pleasure to show their own wealth to others. They feel peace of mind when they ride a good precious mount and pass through the crowd of the poor while, by making dust unto their faces, they despise them.

This showing wealth is often a calamity for their lives, because it fosters grudge in people's hearts.

This evil action may have a motive such as: 'Allurement of covetous persons' and the like, but they do this deed even without this motive. This is a kind of desire, not a program and plan.

However, Korah was not an exception from this law, but he was considered as a clear example of it. The Qur'an has stated it through a sentence in this verse.

It says:

"So he went forth unto his people in his adornment..."

The application of the Arabic word /fi/ (in) in the phrase: 'in his adornment' expresses this fact that he used all his own ability and power in order to show his final adornment and his ultimate wealth, and with no words, it is clear that how large activities he can do by this wealth.

Of course, there are many stories or legends cited in history upon this field which are not necessary to be mentioned.

But, as usual, here people were divided into two groups: 1) The majority of people who were some mammonish persons and when they saw that gazing scene, their hearts shook, and gasped moaning, and they wished they could be in the place of Korah, even for one day, or one hour, or one moment.

They thought what a sweet and attractive life they could have, and how a happy and pleasant world it were for them!

The Qur'an says:

"...Those who aspired for the life of this world said: 'We wish we had like what Korah has been given! Verily he owns a great fortune'."

They said that praise be upon Korah and upon his abundant wealth! What a rank and grandeur! And

what a glory it is that history does not contain anything similar to that! This is a God-given glory…and some statements like them.

In fact, here the furnace of the trial of Allah became hot. From one side, Korah is in the middle of the furnace and he has to be examined for his arrogance; and, on the other side, the mammonists of the Children of Israel are around this furnace.

The painful punishment, of course, is the punishment that exists after such an exhibition and from that height he falls down into the depth of the ground.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 80

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحاً وَلا يُلَقَّاهَآ إِلاَّ الصَّابِرُونَ

80. "And those who were given (***true***) ***knowledge said: 'Woe to you! Allah's reward is better for him who believes and acts righteously, and none shall attain it save the patient'."***

The real knowledge draws man towards Hereafter, piety, and righteous deed. An aware learned man is he whom the dazzling glare of the world might not attract, and his manner can advise the mammonist ones and affect them.

However, besides this large group of mammonist, whom were referred to in the previous verse, there were also several learned, thoughtful, pious, and faithful people present there whose level of thought was above and superior than these affairs.

Those were some men who did not estimate the personality of their people with the criterion of gold and force. They were those who did not seek the values in the material potentialities, and always used to laugh at these kinds of exhibitions mockingly, and belittled these empty minds.

Yes, a group of such men attended there, as the Qur'an says:

"And those who were given (***true***) ***knowledge said: 'Woe to you! Allah's reward is better for him who believes and acts righteously…"***

Then, they added:

"…and none shall attain it save the patient'."

Those who prove steadfastness against exiting dazzling glare of the ornaments of the world; those who stand firm like mountains in the Divine trials for wealth, property, fear, and calamity, yes these ones are eligible for the Divine rewards.

It is certain that the purpose of the Qur'anic phrase:

"Those who were given (true) knowledge"

is the faithful learned men of the Children of Israel among whom there were some great men such as 'Yusha''.

It is interesting that against the Qur'anic sentence:

"Those who aspired for the life of this world",

mentioned in the previous verse, about the first group, the Qur'an does not apply the sentence:

"Those who aspired for the life of Hereafter",

but it emphasizes only on 'knowledge', because 'knowledge' is the main origin and root of faith, steadfastness, eager and love to the Divine reward, and the abode of Hereafter.

By the way, the application of the sentence:

"Those who were given (true) knowledge"

is a severe answer to Korah who considered himself a knowledgeable one. The Qur'an implies that these are true knowledgeable whose level of thought is very high, not the arrogant, obstinate and proud Korah. Thus, we see that the origin and root of all blessings and bounties returns to real knowledge.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 81

فَخَسَفْنَا بِهِ وَبِدَارِهِ الاَرْضَ فَمَا كَانَ لَهُ مِن فِئَةٍ يَنصُرُونَهُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُنتَصِرِينَ

81. "And We caused the earth to swallow up him and his house, then for him there was no group to help him against (the wrath of) Allah, nor could he defend himself."

Man can spiritually move alongside two curves: toward upward that he reaches ascension and toward downward that he goes down deeply into the lowliness.

The final end of amassing wealth is often miser, pride and destruction.

By this action, Korah caused his disobedience to reach its climax, but regarding this matter there has been recorded in history and narrations another event that is the sign of Korah's ultimate impudence, it is as follows:

One day Moses (as) told Korah that Allah had commanded Moses to take the right of the needy (Zakat)

of his property. Then Korah with a simple calculation understood how great amount of money he had to pay in this way. He refused it, and in order to exonerate himself, he struggled against Moses (as).

Once he stood among a rich group of the Children of Israel and said:

"O people! Moses has intended to devour your properties. He brought the command of prayer and you accepted it; you accepted all other things, too; do you also bear to give him your property?"

They said:

"No. But how can we stand against him?"

Here, Korah thought of a Satanic action. He said:

"I have thought a very good way for it. In my opinion, we must produce a file of the act of indecency for him. We must send for a bad woman among the prostitutes of the Children of Israel and tell her to go to Moses and accuse him that he had a liaison with her."

They approved it and sent for that kind of woman and told her whatever she demanded they would give her for the act that she might attest that Moses had a liaison with her. The woman accepted that suggestion.

This was from one side, on the other side Korah went to Moses and said it was better that he (as) would gather the Children of Israel and recite the commands of Allah for them. Moses accepted it and gathered them in one place.

People said to Moses to reiterate the ordinances of his Lord. Moses said that He had commanded him that they should not worship any one other than Him, they should regard for kinship, and do so and so; and in regard for an adulterer He has ordered that if it was an adultery (fornication with a married one) he had to be stoned.

At this time, those rich people of the Children of Israel who had conspired said:

"Even if that man is you yourself!"

He (as) answered:

"Yes, if it is I myself."

Here, they made their shamelessness that reached its climax and said:

"We know that you have committed this action yourself and you have associated with that woman who is a prostitute."

Then, they immediately sent after that particular bad woman and told her to say her attestation. Moses

addressed her and said:

"I administer you an oath by Allah to say the reality clearly."

By hearing this statement, the bad woman shook severely, trembled and was touched at heart. She said:

"Now that you say so I tell the truth manifestly. These people invited me and promised to pay me a heavy reward that I accuse you; but I bear witness that you are pure and you are the messenger of Allah."

Another narration indicates that that woman said:

"Woe on me! I have committed many wrong actions, but I have not denigrated the messenger of Allah."

Then she showed the two purses of money that they had given her and said whatever was to say.

Moses (as) fell prostrated and wept, and it was then that the command of the punishment of Korah, the evildoer, was issued.

This very narration denotes that Allah gave the command of /xasf/ (swallow) at Moses disposal.[7]

In this regard, the Qur'an says:

"And We caused the earth to swallow up him and his house..."

Yes, when inordinacy contumacy and humiliation of the poor believers, as well as plotting against the pure messenger of Allah, reaches its peak, the Power of Allah works and puts an end to the life of the plotters. It destroys them so severely that their life becomes a gazing-stock for all.

The act of /xasf/, which here means: to sink, and being concealed into the earth, has happened many times during the history of man. It occurs when a horrible earthquake comes and the ground splits and swallows a city or some villages. But this one was different with other instances. Its main prey was only Korah, his house, and his treasures.

Strange! Pharaoh sinks in the waves of Nile; Korah sinks in the depth of the ground; water, which is the source of life, is commissioned to destroy the people of Pharaoh; and the ground, which is the place of comfort, becomes the graveyard of Korah and Korah-like people.

It is certain that Korah was not the only inhabitant of that house. It was he and his entourage; he and his confederates, he and his unjust cruel friends. All of those people sank into the depth of the ground.

The verse continues saying:

"...then for him there was no group to help him against (the wrath of) Allah, nor could he defend

himself.”

Neither those who received rations from him, nor his loyal friends, nor his wealth and properties, could save him from the Divine punishment, and all of them sank into the ground.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 82

وَأَصْبَحَ الَّذِينَ تَمَنَّوْا مَكَانَهُ بِالاَمْسِ يَقُولُونَ وَيْكَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَقْدِرُ لَوْلآ أَن مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا لَخَسَفَ بِنَا وَيْكَأَنَّهُ لا يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ

82. “And (by seeing Korah’s annihilation) those who yearned for his position the day before were saying: ‘Ah! That Allah enlarges the sustenance for whomever He pleases, of His servants, or restricts it. Had not Allah been gracious to us, He might have made the earth swallow us, too. Ah! (know) that the unbelievers do not prosper’.”

Sometimes it happens that a supplication is not accepted or a desire is not obtained, and this very thing is the greatest grace and favour of Allah upon man.

This noble verse illustrates the surprising change of the spectators who yesterday were enraptured and rejoiced by seeing the glorious rank of Korah and desired that they were in his place forever, or at least, for a moment. This scene is, indeed, wonderful and instructive.

The verse says:

“And (by seeing Korah’s annihilation) those who yearned for his position the day before were saying: ‘Ah! That Allah enlarges the sustenance for whomever He pleases, of His servants, or restricts it...”

They said that it was proved for them that day that no one has anything from him and whatever exists is from the side of Allah. Neither His grant is the reason of His consent and pleasure from a person, nor his restriction is the reason for the absence of his value before the presence of Allah.

It is by means of these very properties that He puts individuals and nations under examination and makes their conducts and morals manifest.

Then, they thought that if Allah accepted their invocation and put them in the place of Korah yesterday, what could they do that day?

Therefore, they decided to thank for that bounty of Allah and said:

“...Had not Allah been gracious to us, He might have made the earth swallow us, too...”
“...Ah! (know) that the unbelievers do not prosper’.”

Now we see the truth with our own eyes and understand the result of pride and negligence as well as the end of disbelief and lust. We also realize that how terrible these kinds of lives are which have a charming landscape!

By the way, it is understood from the recent sentence of this story that the end of proud Korah was that he died with infidelity and faithlessness, though one day he was in the row of the readers of Torah and was counted among the learned men of the Children of Israel, and he was one of the close relatives of Moses (as).

Some points

The story of Korah, the sample of a proud rich man, has been stated in the Qur'an through seven verses in a very interesting way, and it removes the curtain from the facts of many lives of human beings.

This story makes it clear that the pride and lust of wealth sometimes draws man towards kinds of madness; the madness of exhibiting the wealth and showing it to others, and the madness of taking delight from despising the poor.

And also the same pride and unlimited love to gold and silver sometimes causes man to commit the most hideous and shameful sins. For example, he stands against the pure prophet of Allah, and struggles against the Truth, and even he charges the most shameless accusations to the most sincere men, and he may even use of his wealth in taking from some bad women to reach his aim.

Pride originated from wealth usually does not let man to hearken the advice of some godly advisers and the benevolent statements.

They have provided this imaginary splendid life while in their city, and sometimes on their close neighbourhood, there are some deprived persons who usually sleep hungry at night; and it is surprising that their conscience has become so feeble that they do not feel the least inconvenience from this painful situation.

Sometimes their animals have the most comfortable life, and they enjoy even the existence of teacher, physician, and proper medicine while there are some oppressed people living in their neighbourhood who have the worst conditions of life; or they are sick, moaning in the bed because of pain while they have neither a physician nor any medicine.

When we discuss these affairs about some particular persons in a society, and sometimes about a particular country, it means that it is a country as that of Korah opposite to other countries, of the world, as we see, in our time, about America and many counties of Europe.

They have provided the most glorious life for themselves by exploitation of the people of the third world and those of poor countries, so that sometimes their extra food stuffs are wasted and if they were

gathered in a correct way, they would be enough to satiate millions of hungry men. Sometimes they even pour their extra wheat into the sea.

When we say 'poor countries' it does not mean that they are really poor, but they are, in fact, some thief-stricken and robbed people. Sometimes the best and the most valuable mains are in their disposal, but these great plunders take all of those precious capitals and cause them to be poor.

These are some people with qualities of Korah who have built the foundation of their castles of cruelty upon the ruin houses of the oppressed; and the situation of the world will be in the same form unless the oppressed of the world unite and send them, like Korah, to the depth of the ground. Those oppressors drink wine and laugh joyfully while these oppressed ones must always be sad and do weep.

Of course, it must not be considered from what was said that Islam has a negative position in the face of wealth and opposes it. It must not be understood that Islam admires the poor and invites Muslims to poverty or takes it as a means for reaching the spiritual accomplishments.

On the contrary, Islam emphasizes on wealth as an effective means, and in Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 180 wealth has been rendered into ***/xayr/*** (***goodness***).

Imam Baqir (as) has said:

"The world is a good help for obtaining the Hereafter."[8]

The verses under discussion, which reproach the proud rich Korah the most severely, is an expressive evidence for this subject; but Islam approves a wealth by which the abode of Hereafter can be sought, as the learned men of the Children of Israel told Korah:

"And seek by means of what Allah has given you, the abode of the Hereafter..."[9].

Islam approves a wealth in which there is good unto all and it contains the meaning of:

"...be good (to others) just as Allah has been good to you..."[10]

Islam admires a wealth in which this meaning is seen that the Qur'an says:

"...and so not forget your portion in this world..."[11]

Finally, Islam seeks for a wealth which is not the cause of mischief on the earth, forgetting the human values, being involved in the race of amassing wealth and 'multiplication of properties and children,' and does not draw man toward 'self-admiration' and 'humiliating others', and even opposing the Divine prophets.

Wealth must be a means for the benefit of others, for filling the present economic gaps, for using as a remedy upon the worrying wounds of the deprived and applying for removing the needs and difficulties

of the oppressed.

Being interested in such a wealth, with such aims, it is not an attachment to the world; it is an attachment to the Hereafter. As it is said in a tradition that one of the companions of Imam Sadiq (as) came to him and said as a grievance that they were after the world and were interested in it, (and they were afraid of becoming mammonists).

Imam Sadiq (as) (who knew the purity and virtue of that man) said:

"What do you want to do with this wealth of the world?"

The man answered:

"I want to supply the expenditure of myself and my household, help my relatives, spend in the way of Allah, and perform pilgrimage (Hajj) and lesser pilgrimage ('Umrah)."

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"This is not to seek the world, this is to seek the Hereafter."

Here, the corruption of the belief of two groups is made manifest: a group of people who are apparently Muslims but they are unaware of the teachings of Islam and introduce Islam as the supporter of the tyrant oppressors; and a group of self-interested enemies who want to show the feature of Islam wrongly and try to introduce it as a religion opposite to wealth and adherent of poverty.

They want to say in principle, a poor nation cannot live freely and honourably; poverty is the means of dependence; poverty is the source of disgrace both in this world and the next; and poverty invites man to sin and pollution.

A tradition from Imam Sadiq (as) says:

"The needlessness that hinders you from injustice (and violating others' right) is better than the poverty that makes you commit sin."[12]

The Islamic communities must try and do their best to become rich and needless from others (none Islamic nations), so much that they become independent and stand on their own feet. As the result of poverty, they must not devote their modesty, honour and independence for depending on others, and know that this is the noble line of Islam.

1. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, sermon 82
2. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, saying 192
3. Ma'aniy-ul-'Akhbar, narrated by Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 139
4. Surah Ar-Rahman, No. 55, verse 41
5. Ibid, verse 39
6. Surah Al-Hijr, No. 15, verse 92

7. Durr-ul-Manthur, Tafsir-i-Al-Mizan, Vol. 16, P. 84
8. Wasa'il-ush-Shi'ah, Vol. 12, P. 17
9. The current Surah, verse 77
10. Ibid
11. Ibid
12. Wasa'il-ush-Shi'ah, Vol. 12, P. 17

Section 9: The Apostle (Muhammad)

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 83

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الآَخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لاَ يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوّاً فِي الأَرْضِ وَلاَ فَسَاداً وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

83. "That abode of the Hereafter, we assign it for those who do not intend to exalt themselves in the earth nor (***to make***) ***mischief and the good end is for the pious ones."***

This verse works the resolution of the story of Korah, indicating that any amassing wealth and self-superiority is the cause of destruction in the world and wretchedness in the Hereafter. According to some Islamic narrations, Hadrat Ali-ibn-Abitalib (as) recited this holy verse for the merchants in the market.1

A tradition indicates that if a person thinks of himself as superior to another person because of having a better shoelace, he is one of those who intend to exalt themselves in the earth.2

There are many people who, for providing a residence, vehicle, clothing, speech, marriage and nominating their child, do something that they may become recognized in the society and attract people to themselves. Such people, as the above tradition denotes, intend to exalt themselves in the earth and will be deprived from Heaven.

After mentioning the agitating story of that rich, proud, and criminal man, i.e., Korah, there is a statement in this verse which, in fact, is a general conclusion from this event.

It says:

"That abode of the Hereafter, we assign it for those who do not intend to exalt themselves in the earth nor (***to make***) ***mischief..."***

Not only they are not self-superior and mischievous, but also they do not even intend to do it. Their heart is free from these affairs and their soul is far from these pollutions.

Whatever causes the deprivation of man from the merits of the abode of Hereafter is found, indeed, in these very two things. All sins are concentrated in self-superiority and mischief in the earth.

The reason is that whatever Allah has prohibited us from is surely against the system of the creation of man and the development of his entity. Therefore performing it disturbs the system of his life and, thus, it is the source of mischief in the earth.

Even the subject of self-superiority is itself one of the clear expanses of mischief in the earth, but its extraordinary importance has caused it to be mentioned particularly.

Islamic narrations have specially emphasized on this subject very much. A tradition from Imam Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as) denotes that he said:

*"sometimes it happens that someone likes that his shoelace is better than that of his friend and for this very thing he will be counted in this verse, (because this mood is a small branch of self-superiority)."*3

It is interesting that the author of Kashshaf commentary, after mentioning this tradition says:

"Some of the covetous ones say that according to the sentence:

'Verily Pharaoh exalted himself in the land (of Egypt)...'4

*the word '**to exalt**' mentioned in the abovementioned verse refers to Pharaoh, and according to the sentence:*

"...and do not seek to make mischief in the land"5

*'**mischief**' refers to Korah, and they say he who is not like Pharaoh and Korah, Paradise and the eternal abode belong to him, and thus they send only Pharaoh and Korah and those similar to these two out from Heaven and consider the rest belonging to them.*

They have not taken the last sentence of this verse under consideration which says:

"...and the good end is for the pious ones"

such that Ali (as) has taken it in mind.'

The matter that we must add to this statement is that this group of people have been in err even for knowing Pharaoh and Korah, because Pharaoh both exalted in the earth and was a mischief-maker, when the verse says:

"...Verily he was of the mischief-makers".6

And Korah also was both a mischief-maker and exalted according to the sentence which says:

"So he went forth unto his people in his adornment..." [7]

Another tradition about Imam Ali– (as) indicates that during his apparently caliphate, Ali (as) used to walk in the market, leading those who were lost, helping the weak and, when passing by the sellers and trades men, he recited this verse for them:

"That abode of the Hereafter, we assign it for those who do not intend to exalt themselves in the earth nor (to make) mischief and the good end is for the pious ones.",

then he (as) usually said:

"This verse has revealed about the just and humble rulers and also other powerful ones among people." [8]

This means that in the same manner that I have not use the government as a means for my self–superiority, you must not use your financial ability as means for your domination over others, either, because the good end belongs to that group who do not want to make mischief and do not seek self–superiority.

The Qur'an at the end of the verse says:

"...the good end is for the pious ones."

The word 'end' in its vast concept is 'the good end', victory in this world, and Heaven and its bounties in the next world. We saw what an evil fate had the people like Korah and Pharaoh, though their might was unique. Since they were not pious they afflicted the most painful fate.

We conclude the speech about this verse by a tradition narrated from Imam Sadiq (as).

It happened that when Imam Sadiq (as) recited this verse he began weeping and said:

"By Allah! With this verse, all of the hopes have entirely perished,"

and it is difficult to gain the good abode of Hereafter. [9]

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 84

مَنْ جَآءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِنْهَا وَمَن جَآءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلاَ يُجْزَي الَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السَّيِّئاتِ إِلاَّ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

84. "Whoever brings good, he shall have (reward) better than it, and whoever brings evil, then those who commit misdeeds shall not be requited except for what they used to do."

After mentioning this fact that the good abode of Hereafter and its bounties are specific to the humble,

pious truth-seekers, in this verse the Qur'an refers to stating a general law which is a complex of 'justice' and 'favour' concerning both reward and retribution.

It says:

"Whoever brings good, he shall have (reward) better than it..."

This is the stage of favour or kindness. That is, Allah is not ill-liberate, as some people are, that they try to pay the wage or reward of someone so just and exact in order to observe justice.

Sometimes, He gives the reward of a deed tenfold and sometimes one hundred fold out of His unending grace, and at least He pays ten fold of it, as Surah Al-'An'am, No. 6, verse 160 says:

"Whoever brings a good (deed), he shall have ten times its like..."

And only Allah knows its maximum, a part of which concerning the payment of the alms-tax in the way of Allah is mentioned in Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 61.

Of course, this is not an additional or undue reward. It depends on the level of purity of the deed, sincerity, good intention and serenity of the heart, and this is the stage of Divine favour for the righteous.

Then the Qur'an points to the punishment of the wrong doers.

It announces:

"...and whoever brings evil, then those who commit misdeeds shall not be requited except for what they used to do."

This is the stage of Divine Justice, because, according to the verses of the Qur'an, they will not be punished more than what they have done, even as an atom.

It is interesting that it implies that their own deeds are their retribution. That is, their deed, that according to the law of permanence of beings in the world of existence, the effect of which remains in this world, whether inside of the soul or outside of it, and on the Day of Hereafter, which is the day of manifestation of what is hidden, will be depicted in an appropriate form and will accompany the sinners and will torture them.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 85

إِنَّ الَّذِي فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْءَانَ لَرَآدُّكَ إِلَي مَعَادٍ قُل رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ مَن جَآءَ بِالْهُدَي وَمَنْ هُوَ فِي ضَلاَلٍ مُبِينٍ

85. "Verily He Who has (revealed and) ordained the Qur'an unto you will bring you back to the destination. Say: 'My Lord knows best him who has brought the guidance and him who is in

manifest error."

The Occasion of Revelation

A group of commentators have narrated an occasion of revelation for this verse from Ibn-Abbas, the content of which is as follows:

When the Prophet (S) was coming as migration from Mecca to Medina, he reached Juhfah, a land not so distanced from Mecca. He thought of his home, Mecca, a city which is the secure sanctuary of Allah, and where Ka'bah was located, the thing that the heart and soul of the Prophet (S) had an unbroken link with it.

The signs of this yearning, which had been mixed with an impression and sadness, were seen in his blessed face. Here Gabriel, the harbinger of revelation, came down and asked him (S) whether he was fond of his city and home town. The Prophet answered him positively.

Gabriel said:

"Allah has sent this message for you: 'Verily He Who has (revealed and) ordained the Qur'an unto you will bring you back to the destination.'..."

And we know that this great promise was finally fulfilled and the Prophet of Islam (S), with a mighty army and with abundant glory, returned to Mecca victoriously, and the secure sanctuary of Allah was given to him without fighting and blood shedding.

Thus, the abovementioned verse is one of the miraculous predictions of the Qur'an which stated such a prophecy so decisively and without any condition and it happened after a short time.

This verse addresses the Prophet of Islam (S) and, following the statement about some parts of the life story of Moses, the son of 'Imran (as), and his struggle against Pharaoh, gives a glad tidings with some serious instructions to the Prophet of Islam (S).

We said that the first verse out of these verses, as it is circulated, was revealed in Juhfah when the Prophet (S) was going to Medina. He was going to go to Yathrib and change its name to Madinat-ur-Rasul in order to form the main center of the Islamic government there and to cause the people's talents to open to blow.

He wanted to make it a platform for availability to the vast Divine government and his aims. Yet, his love and affection to Mecca vexed him hard and that periodic from that secure sanctuary of Allah was very inconvenient for him.

Here, the light of revelation enlightened his pure heart and gave him the good tidings of returning to his hometown, and announced:

"Verily He Who has (revealed and) ordained the Qur'an unto you will bring you back to the destination..."

Do not grieve! The same Lord Who returned Moses to his mother when he was a baby; the same Lord Who after ten years of absence returned him from Egypt to his main home-town in order to lighten the light of Monotheism and form the government of the oppressed after breaking the power of Pharaoh and his people, the same Lord will return you to Mecca with full might and strength and will lighten the light of Monotheism by your hand in this holy land.

These affairs are easy for the power of the Lord, the same Lord Who sent down the Qur'an unto your heart and made its conveyance obligatory and its ordinances incumbent. Yes, He is the Lord of the Qur'an, the Mighty Lord of the earth and heavens.

Then the Qur'an adds that, against the stubbornness of the obstinate opponents, the Prophet (S) must treat as follows:

"...Say: 'My Lord knows best him who has brought the guidance and him who is in manifest error."

The way of guidance is clear, and their aberration is manifest. They make themselves tied in vain. Allah is well aware and the truth-seeking hearts also know this reality.

Of course, the manifest commentary of the verse was the same thing which was said in the above, but some of the commentators have delivered some other probable meanings upon the Qur'anic word ***/ma'ad/*** and said that the purpose of /ma'ad/ is 'returning to life after death', or 'the land', or 'the rank of the Great Intercession', or 'Paradise', or Jerusalem which was the place of ascension of the first prophet, and the like.

But regarding to the whole content of Surah Qasas and what is said in the story life of Moses and the Children of Israel, as well as the occasion of revelation that was cited in the above, all of these meanings seem improbable except the commentary of /ma'ad/ i.e., the place of return, the land of Mecca.

In addition, Resurrection on the Day of Hereafter is not something that can be specific to the Prophet (S), while the verse speaks only about the Prophet (S), and this verse, being mentioned after the verse concerning the reward and retribution in the Hereafter, not only is not an evidence for this matter but also it may be a reason for its contrary, because the previous verse talks about the felicity in the next world and it is appropriate that the verse under discussion talks about the victory in this world.

By the way, the commentaries of Burhan, Safi, and 'Atyab-ul-Bayan narrated from Jabir, from Hadrat Imam Baqir (as) and Imam Sadiq (as) that the purpose of the Qur'anic phrase: ***/la radduka 'ila ma'ad/*** is the period of Raj'at (return to this world after death) when the Prophet (S), Imam Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as), the Immaculate Imams (as), those who are absolutely believers, and those who are absolutely

disbelievers will return to this world and the Imams will govern throughout the world and will take vengeance from the enemies.

The narrations of Raj'at are widely transmitted and Raj'at is of the self-evident knowledge of Shi'ah sect. There are also some verses in the Holy Qur'an that adapt to it.

For example:

"He it is Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of Truth, that He may prevail it over all religions, though the polytheists may detest it.", [10]
"Allah has promised those of you who believe and do righteous deeds, that He will certainly appoint them successors in the earth as He appointed successors those before them; and that He will certainly establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that certainly He will, after their fear, give them security in exchange. They will do worship Me (alone) and not associate aught with Me; and whoever disbelieves after this, then these are they that are evil-doers." [11]

and some other verses. Up to now the religion of Islam has not prevailed over all religions and the promise of Allah has not been done yet, but it will not fail either, and this belongs only to the period of Raj'at.

The Late Sayyid Murtada 'Alam-al-Huda has narrated in his book: 'Muhkam Wa Mutashabih' from Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as) that this verse relates to Raj'at in this world. [12]

At the presence of Imam Baqir (as) Jabir-ibn-'Abdillah-'Ansari was spoken about, when Imam Baqir said:

"May Divine Mercy be upon Jabir. He was one of our jurisprudents.

His knowledge had reached to a point that he knew the verse:

'Verily He Who has (revealed and) ordained the Qur'an unto you will bring you back to the destination...'

which relates to Raj'at." [13]

Once Imam Sadiq (as) was asked about the commentary of this verse. He said:

"By Allah, the world will not end until the holy Prophet (S) and Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as) meet each other in Thuwiyyah. They will build a mosque there the doors of which will be numerous." [14]

Thuwiyyah is the name of a province in the suburb of Kufah. [15]

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 86

وَمَا كُنْتَ تَرْجُوا أَن يُلْقَي إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابُ إِلاَّ رَحْمَةً مِن رَبِّـكَ فَلاَ تَكُونَنَّ ظَهِيراً لِلْكَافِرِينَ

86. "And you did not hope that the Book should be cast unto you, except it be a mercy from your Lord, therefore be not a supporter of the disbelievers."

The Divine prophets, with that purity of soul and perfection in worship, did not expect to receive revelation. Revelation and sending Heavenly Books are among the affairs of sovereignty of Allah.

There are two similarities between Hadrat Musa (as) and Hadrat Muhammad (S) found in the verses of this holy Surah:

1. Hoping to obtain fire Hadrat Musa went toward it and he reached a Light. The Prophet of Islam went into Hirra cave intending to worship and he was acquainted with Heavenly revelation.

This verse points to one of the greatest bounties of Allah bestowed on the Prophet (S).

It says:

"And you did not hope that the Book should be cast unto you, except it be a mercy from your Lord..."

A great deal of people had heard the glad tidings of the advent of the new religion and, perhaps, a group of the People of the Book, and other than them, were waiting that the revelation might be sent down on them and Allah would give them this responsibility, but the Prophet (S) did not think of it and Allah knew him the most eligible for it.

Then the verse continues implicitly saying that now for giving thanks upon this great bounty he should follow this command:

"...therefore be not a supporter of the disbelievers."

Surely the Prophet (S) was never a supporter of the disbelievers, this commandment was an emphasis concerning him, and it was the statement of an important duty for others.

This meaning, in fact, agrees with the matter which was mentioned in former verses about Moses that he (as) said:

"...'My Lord! For the bounty you have bestowed on me, never shall I be a supporter of the guilty'."[16]

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 87

وَلا يَصُدُّنَّكَ عَنْ ءَايَاتِ اللَّهِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أُنزِلَتْ إِلَيْكَ وَادْعُ إِلَي رَبِّكَ وَلا تُكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

87. "And let them not turn you away from the signs of Allah after they have been sent down unto you, and invite (mankind) unto your Lord, and be not of the polytheists."

Being attentive to Monotheism and negation of paganism and infidelity, it is so important that in these verses Allah has warned the Prophet (S) about them.

Most sentences concerning this matter in these recent verses are accompanied with the Arabic signs of emphasis, and with the exaggeration form:

(***be not of ..., let them not turn you away ...***).

The two ending verses of the Surah are an emphasis on the subject of Monotheism with some different expressions and reasoning. It is Monotheism which is the origin of all religious affairs, a Monotheism that is both source and branch, both whole and part.

In this holy verse there are four instructions given to the Prophet (S) and Allah is qualified by four attributes which complete the whole discussions of the verses of this Surah.

At first, it says about the pagans:

"And let them not turn you away from the signs of Allah after they have been sent down unto you..."

Although the prohibition is for pagans, its concept is that the Prophet (S) should not surrender for their hindrances and plots. It is just like that we say so and so must not temptate you, i.e., you should not surrender to his temptations.

Thus, the Prophet (S) is commanded that when the Divine verses are sent down, he should stand decisively on them without any hesitation and doubt. He (S) must remove the hindrances that are on his way, and go forward to the destination with firm steps, because Allah is with him and supports him.

According to the statement of Ibn-Abbas, the famous commentator, though the addressee is the Prophet (S), the purpose of the verse is all mankind.

Following this instruction, which had a negative aspect, this holy verse issues the second instruction, which has a positive aspect.

It says:

“...and invite (*mankind*) *unto your Lord...”*

He is the Lord Who is your owner, your trainee, and your fosterer.

After invitation to Allah, the third instruction is negation of any polytheism and idolatry. It says implicitly that he (S) should never become of the polytheists, because the way of Monotheism is brightly clear and those who pave it are on the straight way.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 88

وَلا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلهاً ءَاخَرَ لآ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ هُوَ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلاَّ وَجْهَهُ لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

88. “And do not call upon another god with Allah, there is no god but He. Every thing is perishable but He. He is the Authority and unto Him shall you be returned.”

The true monotheist is the one who is free from all objects of worship, great powers, deviated parties, and tyrants:

(*... do not call upon another god with Allah*).

This holy verse is a second emphasis on the negation of any polytheism, when it says:

“And do not call upon another god with Allah...”

These consecutive instructions, each of which emphasizes on one another, make clear the importance of the subject of Monotheism in Islamic programs without which every thing is lost.

Next to these four instructions, the Qur’an qualifies Allah by four attributes all of which are some repeated emphasis on the subject of Monotheism.

At first, it says:

“...there is no god but He...”
“...Every thing is perishable but He...”

The Judgment and Sovereignty in the world of creation and the world of religion both are specific to His Pure Essence.

The verse says:

“...He is the Authority...”

And the return of all of you is toward Him (s.w.t.):

“…and unto Him shall you be returned.”

These recent three qualities can be a reasoning upon proving the Monotheism and abandoning any kind of idolatry which is inside of the first quality, because:

When we are all perishable and existence is allocated to Him;

When the administration of the system of existence belongs to Him;

And when the return of all of us in the Hereafter is toward Him, what kind of function can other objects of worship have? And except Him, what is appropriate to be worshipped?

The great commentators of the Holy Qur’an have delivered different matters upon the sentence:

“Everything is perishable but He”

which turn on the axis of commenting the Qur’anic term: ***/wajh/*** and the Arabic word /halik/.

Philologically the Arabic word /wajh/ is applied for a part of the body which is located on the face of man, but when it is used concerning Allah, it means ‘His Pure Essence.’

The Arabic term /halik/ is derived from /halak/ which means ‘death’ and ‘destruction’. Therefore the abovementioned sentence refers to the destruction of all beings except His Pure Essence.

They are perishable not only after the end of this world, but also they are perishable before Him just now, because all beings are dependant on His Pure Essence and in all moments they take their own possibility of being from Him and they have nothing from their own essence but that which is from Allah.

Moreover, all beings of this material world are variable and are in the expose of variations, even according to the belief of transubstantiation, the essence is the object of change, and we know motion and variation means perishing into a new thing permanently.

In any moment the beings of the world of matter die and are quickened. Therefore, just now they are perishable and destroyed. The only Essence that does not change, has not destruction, and is absolute independent is His Holy Essence.

We also know that at the end of this world destruction will have a more clear manifestation and, as the Qur’an says:

“Everyone on it must pass away,”
“And there will endure for ever the person of your Lord, the Lord of glory and honour.”[17]

Not only the beings on the earth, but also those who are in heavens will perish.

The Qur’an says:

"The Trumpet will (just) be sounded, when all that are in the heavens and on the earth will swoon..."[18]

This is a commentary consistent with the apparent of this noble verse and other verses of the Qur'an. But some other commentators have delivered some other commentaries on it, too, including as follows:

The objective of the Qur'anic word ***/wajh/*** is ***'righteous deed'***, and the concept of the verse is that all deeds will perish save the deed which has been done for the Pure Essence of Allah.

Some others have said that the objective of the Qur'anic word ***/wajh/*** is that very relation of the things to Allah. Thus, the concept of the holy verse is that everything is naturally perishable except for its relation to Allah.

Some commentators have said that the Qur'anic word ***/wajh/*** means ***'religion'*** and the concept of the verse is that all religions are perishable and nullified, except the religion of Allah. They have taken the Qur'anic phrase ***/la hul hukm/*** in the sense of religious sovereignty and considered it an emphasis upon this commentary.

They have also commented the Qur'anic sentence:

"Unto Him shall you be returned"

in the sense of returning to Allah in choosing religion and a second emphasis on this meaning.

These interpretations, in fact, do not contrast to what was said in the above, because when we accept that the only thing that will remain in this world is the Pure Essence of Allah, it will become clear that whatever is somehow related to His Pure Essence, that thing will also take the colour of existence and eternity to it.

The religion which is from His side is eternal; the righteous deed that is done for Him is eternal; and the Divine leaders who relate to Him, from this point that they are related to Him, are eternal. In short, everything that is somehow related to the Pure Essence of Allah, from that point is not perishable and has not destruction.

At the end, some 'fanatic sects' of Sunnite people say that whoever calls upon other than Allah will become a polytheist, since Allah has said:

"...do not call upon another god with Allah...".

Therefore, those who call the saints of Allah in their supplications are polytheists.

But this verse explains that polytheist is the one who calls upon other than Allah as another god:

"...do not call upon another god with Allah...".

And it is evident that the Shi‘ite people do not call any rank as Allah, but they call the one as a person who has honour with Him, the honour that has been given him from the side of Allah, such as prophets, the friends of Allah, not any illusive intercessor and honoured, since the idol-worshippers in their imagination also consider an honour for their idol.

In this holy verse, wiping polytheism has been stated with different phrases:

1- Do not call upon another god with Allah.

2- There is no god but He.

3- Everything is perishable but He.

4- He is the Authority.

5- Unto Him shall you be returned.

Every year, the king of Sa‘udi Arabia invites the scholars of Islamic sects to entertain them on the Day of festival of sacrifice.

One year ‘Allamah Sayyid Sharaf-ud-Din Jabal-‘Amili (one of the outstanding scholars of Lebanon) was invited to that festival. As soon as ‘Allamah entered the meeting, he gave a Qur'an with leather cover as a gift to the king. The king took it and kissed it.

‘Allamah told him he was a polytheist. The king became inconvenient that why ‘Allamah accused him like that. ‘Allamah answered him that it was so because the king kissed a piece of leather which was an animal's skin and respecting the skin of an animal is polytheism.

The king said:

"I do not kiss any skin. My shoe is made of leather and the skin of animal, but I never kiss it. This piece of leather has been used as the cover of the Qur'an."

‘Allamah said:

"We do not kiss any piece of iron, either. We kiss the iron which has been used as the box, or burial chamber, and the door and window of the grave of the Prophet (S) or that of our Immaculate Imams (as)."

Yes, polytheism is the case when we take someone or something as god instead of Allah, and consider an independent might for that. The Shi‘ite do not consider the might of the friends of Allah as an independent might, but they consider it a power dependent to the power of Allah.

Therefore, if the Shi‘ite make a dome, or build a shrine, it is for the sake that they inform people that

there is a monotheist buried here, or the one who is buried here is a martyr in the way of Allah and has been devoted for Unity. Thus, a dome and an Islamic shrine usually means a center under which the call of Unity is heard, not a center opposite to mosque.

Imam Rida (as) said:

"The prophet of Allah and His Authorities on the earth are /wajhullah/ by whom Allah, religion, and His cognition are paid attention to."[19]

We recite in Nudbah Supplication about the Expected Imam (May Allah hasten his glad advent):

"Where is the Authority of Allah that will come?"

And also we read in it:

"Where is the Authority of Allah who pays attention to the saints?"

O Lord! Do taste us the sweetness of recitation of the Qur'an, contemplation in it and being advised by it!

O Lord! Enlighten our hearts with the Light of the Qur'an, and set our entity a light giver!

O Lord! Cause our manner and speech to be emerged from Qur'an and from the manner and life of Prophet Muhammad (S) and his Immaculate progeny (Ahl-ul-Bayt) (as)

Amen, O the Lord of the Worlds!

1. Majma'-ul-Bayan, following the verse.
2. Jawami'-ul-Jami', the Commentary, following the verse
3. Jawami'-ul-Jami', the Commentary, following the verse
4. The current Surah, verse 4
5. Ibid, verse 77
6. The current Surah, verse 4
7. The current Surah, verse 79
8. Zazan has narrated this tradition from Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as), taken from Majma'-ul-Bayan
9. The commentary of Ali-ibn-'Ibrahim, following the verse.
10. Surah At-Taubah, No. 9, verse 33
11. Surah An-Nur, No. 24, verse 55
12. Bihar-ul-'Anwar, Vol. 93, P. 87
13. Burhan commentary, Vol. 3, P. 240, and Al-'Iqaz, P. 386
14. Bihar, Vol. 53, P. 113
15. Mustadrak Safinah, Vol. 1, P. 429
16. The current Surah, verse 17
17. Surah Ar-Rahman, No. 55, verse 26 and 27
18. Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, verse 68
19. Tauhid-i-Saduq, P. 117

Surah Al-‘Ankabut, Chapter 29

(The Spider)
No. 29 (Revealed at Mecca)
69 Verses in 7 Sections

The Feature of Surah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

This Surah was revealed in Mecca and contains sixty nine verses. The names of some of Suras such as Al-Baqarah Al-Fil, An-Naml, and An-Nahl, have been taken from the names of the animals which are mentioned somehow in these verses.

In verse No. 41 of this Surah, the construction of Polytheism is counted the frailest building like the house of spider and, thus, this Surah has been nominated as Surah ‘Ankabut.

This Surah speaks about a few subjects, such as: Faith, the man’s duty, the Divine trial, the history of some prophets, prohibition of unfair disputes, and relying on other than Allah.

The Virtue of Surah ‘Ankabut

Majma‘-ul-Bayan narrates a noble tradition from the holy Prophet (S) who said:

“Whoever recites Surah ‘Ankabut will have ten good rewards as the number of all believers and hypocrites.”

Section 1: Every Soul Shall Be Tried

Surah Al-‘Ankabut - Verses 1-3

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الم

أَحَسِبَ النَّاسُ أَن يُتْرَكُوا أَن يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لاَ يُفْتَنُونَ

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

1. "Alif 'A', Lam 'L', Mim 'M'."
2. "Do people imagine that they will be left off on saying: 'We believe' and they will not be tried?"
3. "And certainly We tried those before them, and assuredly Allah knows those who speak truly, and assuredly He knows the liars."

The Occasion of Revelation

Some of the commentators have mentioned a narration according to which the beginning eleven verses of this Surah were revealed in Medina.

These verses are about the Muslims who were in Mecca but, though they expressed Islam they did not agree to migrate to Medina, then they received a letter from their brothers lived in Medina who wrote in it:

"Allah does not accept your confession to Faith unless you migrate and come unto us."

Therefore, they decided to migrate and went out from Mecca. A group of pagans pursued them and fought against them. Some of those believers were killed but some others delivered. (Probably some others surrendered and returned to Mecca).

Some other commentators believe that the second verse is about 'Ammar Yasir and a group of other first Muslims who embraced Islam and were seriously tortured by the enemies of Islam.

Some other commentators have said that the eighth verse of the Surah has been revealed upon the belief of Sa'd-ibn-'Abi-Waqqas.

But the study of these verses themselves shows that there is no indication in them upon the relation of these verses with emigration. They only point to the pressures that the believers received from the side of the enemies at that time, and even from the side of their parents who were polytheists.

And, also if these verses refer to the hypocrites, it is probable that they point to a group of persons with superficial belief who were among Muslims in Mecca. They were sometimes with Muslims and

sometimes with the disbelievers, and whenever each of them were in a better position they turned to them.

However, the flowing and union of the verses of this holy Surah necessitates to consider all of them Meccan; and the abovementioned narrations, which have not any flowing with each other, cannot disturb this union.

Again, at the beginning of this holy Surah, we confront the abbreviated letters (***Alif, Lam, Mim***) that we have stated their commentaries from different viewpoints. In this regard, for example, you can refer to the beginning of Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, Surah 'Al-i-'Imran, No. 3, and Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7.

After mentioning the abbreviated letters, one of the most important issues of the man's life is referred to, i.e. the calamities, pressures and Divine trials.

At first, it says:

"Do people imagine that they will be left off on saying: 'We believe' and they will not be tried?"

Then immediately the verse points to this fact that trial is a permanent way of treatment of Allah. Trial is not allocated to the community of Muslims; it is something that all former nations had, too.

The verse says:

"And certainly We tried those before them..."

Allah had tried them in violent furnaces of trials, too, and they were also under the pressure of the cruel, ignorant, unaware, and obstinate enemies. The field of examination has always been open and some groups have ever participated in this field.

The Arabic word /fitnah/ means 'to melt gold in order to separate its impure parts'; and since the real essence of man is recognized in difficulties and calamities from the false mottoes, it is called 'fitnah'.

It must be so, too, because in the case of claiming Faith everyone can introduce himself the best believer, the best striver, and the best advocator devotee of a group of people. The weight, value and worth of this claim must be estimated by means of examination.

Yes, it is true that:

"...and assuredly Allah knows those who speak truly, and assuredly He knows the liars."

It is evident that Allah, the Almighty, knows everything, even the things before the creation of mankind. The purpose of knowledge here is the objective manifestation of the affairs and their external existence.

In other words, it is the practical effects and evidences of the deeds. That is, whoever has it in his

interior must pour it out externally. This is the meaning of ‘knowledge’ with respect to these aspects when they are used about Allah.

The reason of this issue is also clear, because reward and retribution have no meaning unless the inner intentions and esoteric qualities are practically seen in man’s action.

Trial is for proving the intrinsic intentions and qualities of a person to be true.

In other words, this world is like a ‘university’ or a ‘farm’. In a university the talents open to blow, the competencies grow, and whatever is in the stage of potentiality reaches the stage of actuality.

In this farm the seeds must be planted. The shots and sprouts must come out of their inside. These sprouts come out from the land, grow to be some small plants, and finally become some tall fruitful trees. These things are not possible without experience and examination.

By this course we understand that the Divine trials are not only for knowing persons, but they are for fostering the talents and that they are to open to blow.

Therefore, when we examine something, it is for finding out an unknown thing in it, but when Allah examines, it is not for finding out an unknown thing, because His knowledge encompasses everything, but it is for fostering the talents and causing the potentialities to reach to actualities.

The statement of the generality of trial for all nations and communities had a very considerable effect on the Muslims of Mecca, who were in a severe minority at that time, and attending to this fact made them steadfast and patient in front of the enemies of Islam.

Yet, this was not allocated to the believers of Mecca, but every group and nation is somehow involved in this Allah’s way of treatment, and the trials of Allah come to meet them in different sorts.

Some people may be in some environments which are polluted from any point of view, and the temptations of making mischief surround them from all sides. Their great trial is that, in such an atmosphere and in such conditions, they do not tend to the pollutions of the environment and protect their own nobility and purity.

A group may involve in the pressure of deprivations, while they see that if they agree to exchange the capitals of their noble selves, their poverty and deprivation will quickly disappear, but this is for the price of losing their Faith, piety, freedom, nobility, and honour; and this very thing is their trial.

On the contrary, another group may be enjoyed of affluence and different kinds of bounties when material possibilities can be at their reach. Do they try to fulfil the duty of thanksgiving in this circumstance? Or will they be drowned in negligence, haughtiness, self-conceit, egotism, lusts, etc. with alienation unto the society and their own selves both?

Another group encounter some countries that have enjoyed a glaring material civilization and a considerable social welfare while they have no virtue and mortality and are far from Allah.

Here a strong and mysterious attraction drags them toward this kind of life for them and their own society which provides it with them for the price of neglecting all the principles which they believe in, and for the price of accepting the disgrace of dependence. This is also a kind of trial.

Afflictions, pains and toils, wars and conflicts, dearth and scarcity, tyrannical governments which invite people to their own slavery and captivity and call them to submit their own tyrannical programs, and, finally, the strong waves of sensual desire and lust, all of them are a few means of trial in the way of the servants of Allah.

It is in the same events that Faith, personality, piety, purity, trust, and nobility of persons are recognized.

But for gaining victory in these hard trials, there is no way but having continuous effort and endeavour and relying on the particular grace of Allah.

It is interesting that some commentators have narrated a tradition in 'Usul-i-Kafi from Immaculate Imam who upon the commentary of the above verse said:

"They will be tried the like that gold is tried* (*in furnace*)*."

Then he said:

"They will be purified the like that gold is purified (*under the pressure of fire*)*."*[1]

However, those who think that by mere claim of expression of faith they will be in the row of believers and will be admitted in Paradise with the prophets, truthful ones, and martyrs are seriously in err.

Imam Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as) said:

"By Allah, Who sent the Prophet with Faith and truth, you will be severely subverted, bitterly shaken as in sieving and fully mixed as by spooning in a cooking pot till your low persons become high and high ones become low..."[2]

He (as) said this statement just after that people had paid allegiance to him and were waiting to see how Ali (as) treated with division of the Treasury of the Muslims and ranks and positions. They wanted to see whether it was treated with the former criterions or upon the bitter criterion of Islamic Justice.

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verses 4-5

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ أَن يَسْبِقُونَا سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ

مَن كَانَ يَرْجُواْ لِقَآءَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ أَجَلَ اللَّهِ لأَتٍ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

4. "Or do those who practise evil imagine that they will outstrip Us? Evil is it that they judge!"
5. "Whoever hopes to meet Allah, (knows that) the term (appointed) by Allah is surely coming; and He is the Hearing, the Knowing."

Imam Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as) said:

*"The purpose of /liqa'allah/ is the Hereafter Day".*3

We must cure our delusions with the remembrance of death and Resurrection. Both the believers, who are in the course of examination, and the disbelievers must know that opportunities are not durable, and mercy and punishment of Allah will encompass them.

The former verses spoke of the general examination of the believers, and here the first verse under discussion is a severe threat against the disbelievers and sinful ones, so that they should not think that if they put the believers under pressure and the Divine punishments does not promptly seize them, it is because Allah is neglectful of them or He has not the power of punishing them.

It says:

"Or do those who practise evil imagine that they will outstrip Us? Evil is it that they judge!"

Allah's respite must not cause them to be proud, because this is also an examination for them as well as a chance for repentance and their return.

Some commentators have taken this verse as referring to the sinful believers, but this belief is never consistent with the context of the verses, and the frame of references testify that the purpose is polytheists and pagans.

Then, in the next verse, the Qur'an says:

"Whoever hopes to meet Allah, (knows that) the term (appointed) by Allah is surely coming..."

Yes, this promise of Allah is certain and it is a way which must finally be paved.

Moreover, Allah hears all the words and is aware of all deeds and intentions, as the verse continues:

"...and He is the Hearing, the Knowing."

According to the above traditions from Ali (as), the purpose of /liqa'allah/ (to meet Allah) is the Hereafter Day. It is for being quickened and reaching the recompense from the side of Allah by reckoning the deeds on the Day of Hereafter.

It should be said that the meeting Allah on the Hereafter Day is not a sensible meeting, but it is a spiritual meeting and a kind of inner intuition, because in that place the thick curtains of the world of matter will be removed from before the eye of man's soul and man will get into an intuition.

As 'Allamah Tabataba'i has cited in Al-Mizan, the objective of /liqa'allah/ is that the servants of Allah will be set in a state that there will be no curtain between them and their Lord, because the nature of the Hereafter Day is the manifestation of the facts as the Qur'an says:

"...and they will know that Allah, He is the (***very***) ***Manifest truth'."***[4]

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verse 6

وَمَن جَاهَدَ فَإِنَّمَا يُجَاهِدُ لِنَفْسِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

6. "And whoever strives hard, he strives only for his own self, verily Allah is self sufficient, above (***need of***) ***the Worlds".***

The purpose of 'strive' in this verse is not only to struggle with sword against the enemies, but the purpose is effort and endeavour. This effort is in the way of self-improvement and striving against one's self both, or struggling against the temptations of Satan or against the foreign enemies.

This verse implies that whoever strives with effort and endeavour and tolerates the afflictions and difficulties, indeed, he has strived for himself, because Allah is self-sufficient above all the beings of the worlds.

The verse says:

"And whoever strives hard, he strives only for his own self, verily Allah is self sufficient, above (***need of***) ***the Worlds".***

The Divine trial is the man's struggle against low desire, and strive against severe enemies for protecting his faith, purity and piety, else Allah is an unlimited Essence, and He has no need which can be removed by worship or obedience of the servants. He has no deficiency that others give it to Him, but whatever others possess is from Him and they have nothing from themselves.

This statement makes it clear that the Qur'anic word ***/jihad/*** (***strive***) here does not necessarily mean struggle with weapon against the enemy, but it has its own main lexicographical meaning which envelops any kind of effort and endeavour for protecting Faith and piety and suffering all sorts of calamities and local struggles against the obstinate enemy.

Shortly speaking, all the benefits of this struggle return back to the self of the striver, and it is he who

obtains the goodness of this world and the next world under the light of his struggle; and even if the society enjoys the blessings of the struggle it will be in the second stage. Therefore, if anyone succeeds to have this struggle, he must thank Allah for this great bounty.

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verse 7

وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَنُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَحْسَنَ الَّذِي كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

7. "And those who believe, and do righteous deeds, We shall certainly acquit them of their evil deeds, and shall recompense them the best of what they were doing."

Among the best examples of struggle that we studied in the previous holy verse are faith and righteous deed which are mentioned in this verse.

For receiving the Divine rewards, a person needs faith and righteous deeds both.

The Divine reward is not only forgiving the past sins, but it contains the best reward, too. However, this holy verse is an explanation and a complementary meaning for what was said closely in the previous verse under the title of 'strive'.

Here, the reality of struggle is explicitly explained, where it says:

"And those who believe, and do righteous deeds, We shall certainly acquit them of their evil deeds..."

Thus, the first benefit of this great struggle (both Faith and righteous deed) is the concealment of sins which man gains, in the same manners that reward reaches him, too; as it is mentioned at the end of this verse:

"...and shall recompense them the best of what they were doing."

The Arabic word /nukaffirann/ is derived from /takfir/ which originally means: 'To conceal', and the objective of it here is 'the Divine forgiveness'.

Though Allah compensates all of good deeds whether they are 'good' or 'better' and 'best', the application of the phrase: '***The best of what they were doing***' in this verse may point to this fact that Allah reckons all their good deeds as their best deeds.

That is, if some of their deeds are excellent, some are good and some are medium, Allah counts all of them as excellent, and this is the meaning of 'Allah's grace' which is also mentioned in other verses of the Qur'an, such as Surah An-Nur, No. 24, verse 38, which says:

"That Allah may reward them with the best of what they have done, and increase for them out of His grace..."

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verse 8

وَوَصَّيْنَا الإِنسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حُسْناً وَإِن جَاهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلاَ تُطِعْهُمَآ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

8. "And We have enjoined on man goodness unto his parents; and if they strive with you that you should associate (others) with Me, of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them, unto Me is your return, and I will inform you of what you were doing."

The Occasion of Revelation

There are cited different narrations upon the occasion of revelation of the above verse that the extract of all of them is the same, and its explanation is as follows:

Some persons, who were in Mecca, embraced Islam and when their mothers were informed of the subject they decided not to eat food and not to drink water until their sons would apostatize from Islam, though none of these mothers kept her promise and all of them ate food.

Then the abovementioned verse was revealed and showed a clear way to all for the conduct with their parents concerning belief and disbelief.

To do goodness to parents is a humane matter, not a mere creedal subject, and it has no condition either, irrespective of being racial, age, regional, scientific, social, political, economical, and creedal.

Children must do them favour even when they are pagan or polytheist. However, one of the most important trials is the subject of contradiction in the line of faith and piety with the sympathetic and relational links. The Qur'an has clearly stated the duty of the Muslims in this regard.

At first, as a general law, which originates from the roots of affections and gratitude, it says:

"And We have enjoined on man goodness unto his parents..."

This subject is a divine religious ordinance, but before it is a religious binding, it has been settled in the nature of all humankind as a law.

The application of the word 'man', in particular, here attracts the attention, because this law is not only for the believers, but everyone who is eligible to be called under the title of 'human' must be gratitude before his parents, and he does not forget honour, kindness and benevolence to them throughout his lifetime, though he can never pay his debt to them by these acts.

Then, in order that no one imagine that the emotional link with parents can overcome the link of man with Allah and Faith, it makes clear the matter with an explicit exception in this regard.

It says:

"...and if they strive with you that you should associate** (**others**) **with Me, of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them..."

The application of the Qur'anic term ***/jahadaka/***, in the verse, means that they use their most effort and endeavour with persistence.

And, the applications of the phrase 'of which you have no knowledge' refers to the fact that polytheism is not a logical thing, since if polytheism were really correct, there would exist an evidence for it. In other words, where man has not knowledge to a thing he must not follow it, let alone that he has knowledge to its falseness.

Following such a thing is following one's ignorance. If parents make you follow ignorance, you should not obey them. In principle, blindly imitation is wrong, even when it is about Faith, let alone polytheism and paganism.

This very disobedience in regard to parents is also mentioned in Surah Luqman, with this addition that while you must not accept their invitation to polytheism you ought to help them in worldly affairs and have kindness in social intercourse with them, lest no one imagine that opposition with parents concerning their invitation to polytheism is an evidence unto having ill-treatment toward them; where it says:

"...yet bear them company in this life with justice..."[5].

And this proves the utmost emphasis of Islam on respecting the parents.

Thus, a general principle is understood here that nothing can prevail the relation of man with Allah, because this relation is before all things, even the relation of the parents which is the closest emotional relations.

The famous tradition narrated from Ali (as) who said:

"There should be no obedience for anyone in disobeying Allah"[6]

gives a clear criterion.

And, at the end of the verse, the Holy Qur'an adds that Allah will give you entirely the reward and retribution of what you used to do:

"...unto Me is your return, and I will inform you of what you were doing.""

This sentence, in fact, is a threat against those who pave the way of polytheism as well as those who invite others to this way, because the verse clearly indicates that Allah keeps the account of all their deeds and deliver them to them at the appropriate time.

It is not the first time that the Holy Qur'an points to this important issue of man. Formerly it was referred to in Surah Al-'Asra', No. 17, verse 23, and later this important matter will be pointed out in Surah Luqman, No. 31, verses 14 and 15 and also in Surah Al-Ahqaf, No. 46, verse 15.

In fact, Islam considers the highest respect for these two, father and matter, in a manner that even when they are polytheists and they invite to polytheism, which is the most shunned acts in the view of Islam, yet it enjoins the protection of their respect, with disobedience in regard to their invitation to polytheism.

This is, in fact, one of the great Divine trials which has been referred to at the beginning of this Surah; for parents are sometimes so old that keeping and hearing them are difficult. It is at this time, indeed, that the children must take their own examination in the field of gratitude and obeying the command of Allah, and keep protection from their parents in the best form.

A tradition from the Prophet (S) indicates that once someone came to him and said:

"Whom should I do goodness to?"

He (S) answered:

"To your mother."

Again the man asked:

"Next to her?"

He (S) said:

"To your mother."

For the third time he asked:

"Next to her?"

Again he (S) said:

"To your mother."

And in the fourth time, he (S) recommended him to do goodness to his father and then to other relatives according to their nearness to the man.[7]

In another tradition, which has been mentioned in many Islamic books, the Prophet (S) said:

“Paradise is under the feet of the mothers.”

And it is only by the way of humility and veneration in front of them that a person can enter Paradise.

Some Other Traditions

1- The holy Prophet (S) said:

“Whoever obeys the command of Allah concerning parents, two doors of Paradise will be opened to him, and if he fulfils the command of Allah unto one of them, then one door will be opened.”[8]

2- The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“The servant who is obedient to his parents and to his Lord: (on the Hereafter Day) he will be in the highest rank (in Paradise).”[9]

3- The Messenger of Allah (S) once said:

“He who performs pilgrimage rite for his parents, or pays their debt, on Resurrection Day Allah will rouse him with the righteous.”[10]

4- The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“He who likes to have a long lifetime and his sustenance increases, he should do good to his parents and visit his kim.”[11]

5- Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“The best deeds are prayer at its (proper) time, doing kindness to the parents, and struggle on the way of Allah.”[12]

6- The Messenger of Allah said:

“Do good to your parents so that your children do good to you; renounce the women of people so that your women be chaste (and others renounce your women).”[13]

7- The Prophet of Allah said:

“The affectionate look of the progeny to his parents is worship.”[14]

8- Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“What hinders a person among you that he does good to his parents when they are alive or dead by praying for them, giving alms for them, doing pilgrimage rites for them, and observing the fast for them, because if he does such, the parents will be rewarded, and he, too, will be rewarded the same amount.

*Moreover, Allah (Almighty, and Glorious) gives him much goodness for his goodness and his prayer (Salat)."*15

9- The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

*"Whoever visits the graves of his parents or one of them once every Friday Allah forgives him and writes him among the righteous."*16

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verse 9

وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَنُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ فِي الصَّالِحِينَ

9. "And those who believe, and do righteous deeds, certainly We shall admit them among the righteous."

The fact that formerly was stated about those who have Faith and righteous deed is repeated and emphasized again in this verse.

It says:

"And those who believe, and do righteous deeds, certainly We shall admit them among the righteous."

Upon the purpose of the repetition of this meaning, some commentators have said: former verses pointed to those who pave the path of the truth, and this verse points to those who are the guides of this path and are as signs to the way of Monotheism, since the application of /salihin/ (righteous) is mentioned about many of the prophets, those who asked Allah to join them to the righteous ones.

This is also probable that in former verses the words were about the forgiveness of sins and good reward for this group of believers, but here their high rank is referred to, which itself is another reward for them. They will be set in the row of both the righteous, and the Divine prophets, and truthful ones, and the martyrs, and they will keep company with them.

By the way, some commentators, such as the author of Tafsir-i-Al-Mizan, say that the purpose of 'believers' mentioned in this verse, regarding the previous verse, means the children who, under the command of parents, are invited to polytheism that if they persist and, for protection of their Faith, become vagrant from their house and region, though being far from parents is difficult for them, on the Hereafter Day Allah will admit them among the righteous.

Surah Al-‘Ankabut - Verse 10

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ فَإِذَآ أُوذِيَ فِي اللَّهِ جَعَلَ فِتْنَةَ النَّاسِ كَعَذَابِ اللَّهِ وَلَئِن جَآءَ نَصْرٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّا كُنَّا مَعَكُمْ أَوَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِمَا فِي صُدُورِ الْعَالَمِينَ

10. “And among the people there are those who say: ‘We believe in Allah,’ and when they are hurt in Allah’s cause, they think the persecution of men as it were Allah’s chastisement, and if help comes from your Lord, they would certainly say: ‘Verily we were with you’. What! Is not Allah the Best-Knower of what is in the breasts of mankind?”

The expression of Faith by some people is only oral and it is not said by heart. The true faith will often be made manifest at the time of afflictions.

Imam Ali (as) said:

“The reality (and essence) of man will be known in the change of circumstances.”[17]

In view of the fact that there were mentioned some explicit statements about the ‘righteous believers’ and ‘polytheists’ in the former verses, in this verse the words are about the third group, viz.: ‘hypocrites’.

It says:

“And among the people there are those who say: ‘We believe in Allah,’ and when they are hurt in Allah’s cause, they think the persecution of men as it were Allah’s chastisement, and if help comes from your Lord, they would certainly say: ‘Verily we were with you’. What! Is not Allah the Best-Knower of what is in the breasts of mankind?”

The Arabic word /’amanna/ (we believe), is used in the verse in plural form, while the next phrase is in singular and it may be for the reason that this group of hypocrites want to be counted among the group of believers then they say /’amanna/ (we believe) and they mean that they have believed like other people.

The application of ‘***they are hurt in Allah’s cause***’ is in the sense of ‘they are hurt in the way of Allah’, that is, they sometimes are hurt in the way of Allah and Faith by their enemy.

It is interesting that when speaking about the punishment of Allah, the Qur’anic word ***/‘a▯ab/*** is used, but when it speaks about people’s hurts it uses /fitnah/ (trial) indicating that people’s hurts are not in fact ‘punishment’ but they are trials in order to complete man.

In this way it teaches them that they might not compare these two with each other, and by the pretext that the opponents hurt and torture them they leave out their Faith, because this is a part of total

program of trial in this world.

There arises a question here that which victory had Allah bestowed on the Muslims in Mecca that hypocrites demanded share in it?

The answer of it is that the above sentence is a conditional sentence, and we know that a conditional sentence is not an evidence for the existence of condition, but its concept is that if there will be some victories for the Muslims in future, these feeble-faith hypocrites will demand share in them.

Moreover, the Muslims gained some victories against enemies in Mecca, although they were not martial and they were some victories in the fields of propagation, penetration in public thoughts, and the development of Islam amongst the different levels of people.

Besides, the application of the word 'hurt' fits with the environment of Mecca, else in the environment of Medina such a thing rarely happened.

However, this point was also made clear that the term 'hypocrites' is not only used for those who have never Faith inwardly and do not express Faith, but those feeble-Faith persons who, under the pressure of this and that individuals soon change their belief are counted among hypocrites, and the holy verse under discussion apparently speaks of this kind of hypocrites and announces that Allah (s.w.t.) is aware of their intentions.

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verse 11

وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ

11. "And certainly Allah knows those who believe, and certainly He knows the hypocrites."

Belief in the knowledge of Allah is the factor of abandoning hypocrisy.

It is only Allah Who knows the true and false believers, and therefore in this verse the Qur'an says:

"And certainly Allah knows those who believe, and certainly He knows the hypocrites."

If some simple-minded people think that they can be far from the dominance of the knowledge of Allah by concealing the facts, they are in a manifest err.

Again we repeat that the application of the word hypocrites here is not the evidence upon thinking that these verses were revealed in Medina.

It is true that the subject of hypocrisy usually appears after the victory of a group and forming government when the opponents change their features and form hidden organizations, but, as it was

said before, hypocrisy has a vast scope of meaning and it envelops the persons of weak belief who change their faith by a little pressure.

Surah Al-‘Ankabut - Verse 12

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّبِعُوا سَبِيلَنَا وَلْنَحْمِلْ خَطَايَاكُمْ وَمَا هُم بِحَامِلِينَ مِنْ خَطَايَاهُم مِن شَيْءٍ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ

12. “And those who disbelieve say unto those who believe: ‘Follow our path and we will certainly bear (the burden of) your sins.’ And they shall not be bearers of any thing of their sins. Verily they are liars.”

In order to invite and encourage others to do mischief and wrong, the deviated persons often say: if it has any sin we carry the burden of that sin, while no one can undertake the sin of another one.

This verse points to one example of the weak and haughty logics of the polytheists which exists among a vast group, too, even just now.

It says:

“And those who disbelieve say unto those who believe: ‘Follow our path and we will certainly bear (the burden of) your sins.’…”

Today, we see many seductive persons that at the time of invitation to a wrong action say if it has any sin they bear its sin, but we know that none can bear the burden of any one’s sin.

In principle, this thing is not rational, because Allah is just and He does not punish anyone for the crime of another one. Besides, with these baseless words, the responsibility of a person for his deeds does not go away, and against that which some short-minded persons imagine these meanings do not decrease aught from the man’s punishment.

That is why no court heeds this kind of words that so and so has undertaken its sin. It is right that this person who has encouraged the other has a share in his sin, but this participation does not decrease his responsibility at all.

Therefore, in the next sentence of the verse, the Qur’an explicitly says:

“…And they shall not be bearers of any thing of their sins. Verily they are liars.”

Surah Al-‘Ankabut - Verse 13

وَلَيَحْمِلُنَّ أَثْقَالَهُمْ وَأَثْقَالاً مَعَ أَثْقَالِهِمْ وَلَيُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ

13. “And certainly they shall carry their own burdens, and* (*other*) *burdens with their own burdens, and certainly they shall be questioned on the Day of Resurrection as to what they were forging.”

The deviators carry the burden of those who have been deviated, too.

In order that there would not come an imagination that these inviters to paganism, polytheism, idolatry, and injustice will not have any chastisement for their action, this noble verse says:

“And certainly they shall carry their own burdens, and* (*other*) *burdens with their own burdens...”

This burden is the burden of the sin of misguidance, seduction, and encouraging others to sin.

This is the burden of establishing a bad tradition about which the Prophet (S) said:

“Whoever establishes a bad tradition, the sin of that tradition and the sin of those who commit it are upon him without that anything can be decreased from the sin of the person who performs it.”[18]

The important thing is that they also share the sin of all those who commit it while these sinners have their own sin without decreasing anything of it, and we know that whoever is effective in the preparation of an action, he has a share of that action, though the preparation is simple.

The evidence for this statement is the tradition narrated from the Prophet of Islam (S). Once the Prophet (S) was accompanied with some of his companions when a beggar came and asked for help, but no one gave him anything. Then a man took the lead and helped him something. Others were encouraged thereby and helped him, too.

Here the holy Prophet (S) said:

“Whoever establishes a good tradition and others follow him there will be for him his own reward and from the reward of those who follow him without that their rewards be decreased anything, and whoever establishes an evil tradition and others follow him, there will be for him his own sin and from the sins of those who follow him without that their sins be decreased anything.”

Similar to this meaning, with some different statements, there has been mentioned in the tradition sources of both great sects of Islam: Sunnites and Shi‘ites; and this is a known tradition.

However, at the end of the verse, the Qur’an says:

“...and certainly they shall be questioned on the Day of Resurrection as to what they were forging.”

But, there arises another question here that what is the purpose of this calumny, mentioned in the verse that they have to answer its question?

Answer: It may refer to the falsehoods they forged to Allah and said that Allah (s.w.t.) had said that they should worship those idols.

Or it may refer to their words that they implicitly said every person could bear the responsibility of another's sin. But this statement is also a lie and a calumny, because everybody is responsible of his own deeds.

Finally, the Arabic word /iql/ is often used for the house furniture, and its plural form is /'aqal/.

It has also been used in the famous tradition of the Prophet (S) who said:

"Verily I leave behind me two weighty (very worthy and important) things: the Book of Allah (i.e. the Qur'an) and my progeny, my Ahl-ul-Bayt. Never, never will these two get separated from each other until they meet me at the Haud of Kauthar (the Pond of Abundance)..."

Besides the Shi'ah, this tradition is accepted by the consensus of the Sunnite and it has been mentioned in all their history, tradition and commentary authentic books narrated from the Prophet (S) with different statements.

Its secret is that after the event of Qadir-i-Khum and appointing Amir-ul-Mu'minin 'Ali-ibn-Abi-Talib (as) to the rank of caliphate and government after his death, the Prophet (S) recommended about Ali-ibn-Abi-Talib (as) and his progeny in different occasions and many times he (S) uttered of these kinds of words.

Hakim-i-Neyshabury has narrated the abovementioned tradition in the book: Mustadrak, part 3, Page 48. In another tradition its similar Meaning is cited by Tarmathi. He narrated from Kanz-ul-'Ummal, Vol. 1, P. 44, from the Messenger of Allah (S) who said:

"I leave behind me among you what that if you attach yourselves to it, never, never shall you get astray, the Book of Allah (i.e. the Qur'an) which is a stretched string from the heaven to the earth, and my progeny, my Ahl-ul-Bayt, for verily Allah, the Merciful, the Aware, informed me that never, never will these two get separated from each other until they meet me at the Houd of Kauthar (the Pond of Abundance).

Therefore, be careful and contemplate on how you will treat them (after me)."

This tradition very well shows the awareness of the Prophet (S) from the future of his Ummah. It seems that the Prophet (S) could see the deviations of the people after his own death that would take place by the authority of a group of ambitious persons, and in order to attract the attention of people more, he said of this kind of statements abundantly.

It was specially only a few months after the historical event of Qadir-i-Khum that at the time of his death with the purpose of confirming the caliphate of Ali (as) the Prophet (S) wanted to write it down on the

paper but, according to Shaykh Mufid, the sentence which was uttered by one of the companions and created discord, the Prophet (S) avoided writing anything to hinder the discord, but he recommended it orally.

In this regard you can refer to the history texts of Shi‘ah and the authentic books of tradition and commentary of the Sunnite, including the book entitled: As-Sawa‘iq by Ibn Hajar ‘Aqlani, P. 135 – (Kanz-ul-‘Ummal) Hindi, Vol. 1, chapter ’Al-’I‘tisam Bil-Kitab Wal-Sunnah – The book: Al-Mustadrak by Hakim-i-Neyshaburi, Part 3, P. 148 – The Book: Al-Musnad, by Imam Ahmad Hanbal, Vol. 3, PP. 17, 26, 29 – Al-Muraji‘at, by Sayyid Sharaf-ud-Din ‘Amili – The epistle: Fi Hadith-ith-Thaqalayn, by Qawam-ud-Din Washnuwi, and...

According to the citation of Ibn-i-Hajar, who is one of the notables of the Sunnite in the book As-Sawa‘iq, this tradition has been narrated by more than twenty persons from the companions of the Prophet.

Some of them are as follows:

1- Imam-ul-Muttaqin ‘Ali-Ibn-Abi-Talib (as)

2- Imam Hassan (as)

3- Salman Farsi

4- ’Abuthar Qafari

5- Ibn ‘Abbas

6- Abu Sa‘id

7- Jabir-ibn-‘Abdillah ’Ansari

8- Abu Hashim-ibn-Tihan

9- Hathifah Yamani

10- Abu-Rafi’Maula Rassulillah the Messenger of Allah (S)

11- Hathifat-ibn ’Asbad Qafari

12- Khazifat-ibn-Thabit-Zush-Shahadatayn

13- Ziyd-ibn-Thabit

14- ’Anas-ibn-Malik

The famous tradition of Thaqalayn, with abovementioned documents is one of the proofs of Shi‘ah about immediate Imamate and caliphate of ‘Ali-ibn-Abi-Talib and his progeny, and Shi‘ah has other proofs in this regard, too, including the explicit text of the Qur’an, that for shortness we do not mention them here.

1. ’Usul-i-Kafi, according to narration of Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 148
2. Hahj-ul-Balaqah, sermon 16
3. Tafsir-i-Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, and Tauhid-i-Saduq, P. 267
4. Surah An-Nur, No. 24, verse 25
5. Surah Luqman, No. 31, verse 15
6. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, saying: No. 165
7. Bihar, Vol. 74, P. 49 and Majma‘-ul-Bayan following the verse
8. Kanz-ul-‘Ummal, Vol. 166, P. 467
9. Ibid
10. Ibid, P. 468
11. Kanz-ul-‘Ummal, Vol. 16, P. 475
12. Bihar, Vol. 74, P. 85
13. Kanz-ul-‘Ummal, Vol. 16, P. 466
14. Bihar, Vol. 74, P. 80
15. Ibid, P. 46
16. Kanz-ul-‘Ummal, Vol. 16, P. 468
17. Nahj-ul-Balaqahm, saying No. 217
18. The commentary by Fakhr-i-Razi, Vol. 25, P. 40

Section 2: Noah and Abraham’s Mission

Surah Al-‘Ankabut - Verses 14-15

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَاَ نُوحاً إِلَي قَوْمِهِ فَلَبِثَ فِيهِمْ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ إِلاَّ خَمْسِينَ عَاماً فَأَخَذَهُمُ الطُّوفَانُ وَهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ

فَأَنجَيْنَاهُ وَأَصْحَابَ السَّفِينَةِ وَجَعَلْنَاهَآ ءَايَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

14. “And certainly We sent Noah to his people, so he remained among them a thousand years save fifty years. And the deluge overtook them while they were unjust.”
15. “So we delivered him and the Companions of the Ark. And We made it a sign for all peoples.”

Propagation and training need patience and resistance. This holy verse shows the resistance of Noah (as) and obstinacy of people.

However, since the previous verses had some statements about the general trial of people, from here on

the verses contain some discussions about the hard trials of the former divine prophets and their peoples that how they were under the pressure and hurt of their enemies, and how they applied considerable patience that finally they gained victory.

This was both consolation for the companions of the holy Prophet of Islam (S), who were under the harsh pressure of the powerful enemies of Islam in Mecca, and a threat for the enemies that they should be careful of the painful end of their lifetime.

At first, it begins from the first arch-prophet, i.e. Noah (as), and in some short sentences it explains that part of his life that is more suitable with the condition of the Muslims of that day.

It says:

"And certainly We sent Noah to his people, so he remained among them a thousand years save fifty years..."

All days and nights Noah was busy teaching and inviting people to Monotheism. During this long time, that is 950 years, using the opportunity both in private and among public, Noah called them toward Allah and he did not become tired from this constant effort, and he did not let weakness and intermission come to him.

Yet, they did not believe save a small group (about eighty people as history narrates), that is, every twelve years one person.

Therefore, O Prophet! you should not get tired in the way of invitation toward the truth and struggle against deviations, because your program comparing that of Noah is very easy.

Now behold that how the end of this cruel and obstinate group of people was.

The verse continues saying:

"...And the deluge overtook them while they were unjust."

And thus the length of their disgraceful life ended and their castles, palaces, and dead bodies were buried under the waves of flood.

The application of 'a thousand years save fifty years' in the verse, while it could say 950 years from the beginning, refers to the greatness and length of this time, because the figure 'one thousand' which is used in the form of 'a thousand years' for 'the length of the time of propagation' is counted a very enormous figure:

The apparent of the above verse shows that this amount was not the whole lifetime of Noah, though the present Torah has mentioned this figure for the entire lifetime of Noah[1], but he lived another length of time after Flood either, and according to some commentators this time was three hundred years.

Of course, this long lifetime comparing the usual life times of our age is very long and it does not seem natural. It is probable that the length of lifetime in those days was different from that of today.

Some documents indicate that, in principle, the people of Noah had a long lifetime and, in this course, Noah had also been extraordinary. However, this shows that the man's structure lets him have a long lifetime.

The studies of the scientists show today that man's lifetime has not a fix and determined restriction. Some people consider it as limited to 120 years, or less and more than that which is completely baseless, and with the change of conditions it may vary.

Now, by some experiences, scientists could prolong the lifetime of some plants, or some other living creatures, to twelve times of their ordinary lifetime, and in some instances, if you do not wonder, to nine hundred times. If they succeed they can increase the man's lifetime with the same criterion, and man may live thousands of years.[2]

By the way, it must be noted that the Arabic word /tufan/ originally means any event that surrounds man. (It derives from Tawaf).

Then it has been used for abundant water, or a strong flood which covers a vast land and overtakes it, and also it has been used for any thing that is severe, much, and stretched, irrespective of wind, fire, and water. Sometimes it has also been used in the sense of severe darkness of the night.[3]

It is interesting that the holy verse says: /wa hum zalimun/ (while they were unjust) which means: at the time of the occurrence of the flood, they were going on their injustice. This indicates that if they had left this deed and became regretful with going to Allah, they would not have been involved in such an evil fate.

Then, in the next verse, it adds:

"So we delivered him and the Companions of the Ark. And We made it a sign for all peoples."

It was made a sign for all peoples and it means that it is a gazing-stock for all people until the Hereafter Day, because the event of the Ark separated the line of the believers from disbelievers and distinguished the righteous ones from the guilty ones, in order to prove that Noah was truthful in his statement, and his people were infidels.

By the way, the pronoun in the Arabic phrase: /ja'alnaha/ refers to the Arc.

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verse 16

وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاتَّقُوهُ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

16. “And (recollect) Abraham when he said unto his people ‘Worship Allah and be in owe of Him; that will be best for you if you did but know’.”

Monotheism and piety are at the top of the programs of Divine prophets, and, therefore, worship without piety is not so effective.

Next to the concisely explained event of Noah (as) and his people, the Qur’an refers to the story of Abraham (as), the second great arch-prophet, and says:

“And (recollect) Abraham when he said unto his people ‘Worship Allah and be in owe of Him; that will be best for you if you did but know’.”

Here, the noble verse has stated two important creedal and practical programs of the prophets with together, which is invitation to ‘Monotheism’ and ‘piety’.

At the end of the verse it says if you contemplate correctly, following Monotheism and piety is the best for you, because they save you in this world from pollutions of polytheism and sin and affliction, and your next world will also be with perpetual felicity.

Surah Al-‘Ankabut - Verse 17

إِنَّمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْثَاناً وَتَخْلُقُونَ إِفْكاً إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ لاَ يَمْلِكُونَ لَكُمْ رِزْقاً فَابْتَغُوا عِندَ اللَّهِ الرِّزْقَ وَاعْبُدُوهُ وَاشْكُرُوا لَهُ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

17. “You worship idols besides Allah and you create a calumny, verily those whom you worship besides Allah do not own for you any sustenance, therefore seek the sustenance from Allah and worship (only) Him, and be grateful to Him, unto Him you shall be returned.”

Through the previous verse, Hadrat ’Ibrahim invited people to worship and obedience of Allah, and in this holy verse he (as) negates the worship of other than Allah and counts it useless while, at the end of the verse, he emphasizes again on the worship of Allah.

Then, Abraham points to the reasons of the nullification of idolatry and condemns their belief earnestly with different statements, each of which contains a separate reason.

At first, he says:

“You worship idols besides Allah…”

These idols are some statues with no soul. They have no will, no intellect, no sense, and no understanding, so that their appearance is a clear evidence for the falseness of the belief of idolatry.

You must be careful that the Arabic word /auan/ is the plural form of /waan/ in the sense of some pieces of stone which idolaters curve and worship.

After this, he goes further and he implicitly says that not only the circumstances of these idols show that they cannot be worshipped, but you also know that you yourselves forge some falsehoods and put the name of the object of worship on them.

The verse continues as follows:

"...and you create a calumny..."

What kind of reason do they have for this great lie, except some fancies and superstitions?

Since the Arabic term /taxluqun/ is derived from /xalaqa/ which sometimes is used with the meaning of 'to create and to make' and sometimes with the sense of 'to lie', some commentators have mentioned another commentary upon this sentence which is different from what was said in the above.

They have said that the purpose is that you grate these idols (false idols) with your own hand and you create them. (Therefore, the word /'ifk/ means 'false objects of worship' and /xalq/ means 'to grate and to create some stone and wooden idols'.

Then he refers to the third reason, saying that your worship due to these idols is either for material interests or your fate in the next world, and whichever of them it may be it is wrong, because:

"...verily those whom you worship besides Allah do not own for you any sustenance..."

You yourselves accept that idols are not creators, and the Creator is Allah, therefore the giver of sustenance is also Allah.

The verse says:

"...therefore seek the sustenance from Allah..."

And since He is the giver of sustenance, then worship and thank Him, too.

The verse continues saying:

"...and worship** (**only**) **Him, and be grateful to Him..."

In other words, one of the incentives of worship is usually thanksgiving unto the true benefactor. You know that the true Benefactor is Allah, then thanks and worship is also specific to His Pure Essence.

And if you seek the life of the next world, the return of all of you is unto Him, not unto idols.

The verse says:

"…unto Him you shall be returned."

Idols are effective neither here nor there. Thus, Abraham (as) condemns their logic by means of a few short and clear proofs in these verses.

Surah Al-'Ankabut – Verse 18

وَإِن تُكَذِّبُوا فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ أُمَمٌ مِّن قَبْلِكُمْ وَمَا عَلَي الرَّسُولِ إِلاَّ الْبَلاَغُ الْمُبِينُ

18. "And if you reject** (**the Message**)**, so did generations before you and nothing is incumbent on the messenger but a plain delivery** (**of the message**)**."

The rejection of the opponents should not hinder the act of propagation.

In this verse, as a threat and also as heedlessness to them, Abraham (as) says:

"And if you reject** (**the Message**)**, so did generations before you…"

And, of course, they were punished severely with a painful chastisement.

The verse continues saying:

"…and nothing is incumbent on the messenger but a plain delivery** (**of the message**)**."

The objective of "***generations before you***" is the people of Noah and the nations who came to live after them.

Surah Al-'Ankabut – Verse 19

أَوَ لَمْ يَرَوْا كَيْفَ يُبْدِئُ اللَّهُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَي اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

19. "Have they not seen how Allah originates creation, then brings it back again? Verily that is easy for Allah."

Creation, causing to die, and to raise from the dead are the permanent work of Allah; and the world of creation is the manifestation of providence in creating the life and death of phenomenon.

In this point, the Qur'an temporarily leaves out the story of Abraham, and completes the discussion that Abraham had in the field of Monotheism and expressing his own prophethood by mentioning reason upon Resurrection, and concerning the rejecters of Resurrection it says:

"Have they not seen how Allah originates creation, then brings it back again?..."

The purpose of the act of 'see' is the observation by heart and having knowledge about it. It means: do they not know the quality of the creation of Allah? The same One Who had the power of 'the first creation' is also able to return it, because having power on one thing is the power on its similar ones, too.

This is also probable that the word 'see' here is used in the sense of observation by the eye, because everybody observes by his eye that dead lands are quickened, plants grow, babies are born from sperm drop, and chickens are produced from eggs. The One Who is able to do such things, is also able to bring the dead to life again.

Then, at the end, as an emphasis, it says:

"...Verily that is easy for Allah."

It is so because comparing the creation on the first day, revival is counted an easier work.

This meaning, of course, is due to the conception and logic of individuals, else being easy or difficult has no meaning for the One Whose Power is unlimited. It is our limit power that creates these concepts and regarding its application, some things are difficult and some others are easy.

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verse 20

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الأَرْضِ فَانْظُرُوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُنشِئُ النَّشْأَةَ الآخِرَةَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

20. "Say: 'Travel in the earth and see how He has originated the creation, then Allah brings forth the later creation; verily Allah is powerful over everything'."

By exact study in creation, we can remove our doubt and know Allah better than before.

Peregrination, traveling, studying the nature, and purposeful excursion is a duty and value.

This holy verse continues the subject of Resurrection. This meaning has been expressed in the form of parenthetical clauses in the middle of the story of Abraham (as).

This is not the first time that we encounter such a method of explanation. This is the style of the Qur'an that when the statement of a story reaches a sensitive stage, it temporarily leaves the rest of it and pays to the necessary conclusion emerged from that story.

However, this verse invites people to extroversive traveling upon the subject of Resurrection, while the previous verse had mostly the side of introversive traveling. The verse implicitly says that you should

travel on the earth in order to see kinds of living creatures, and different nations with their specialties and observe how Allah (s.w.t.) has originated the creation.

The verse announces:

"Say: 'Travel in the earth and see how He has originated the creation..."

Then, the same Lord, Who has the power to create these plenty creatures with various colours and different nations, is able to bring forth the next creation, because by the first creation He has proved His Power to all and, truly, He is powerful over everything.

The verse says:

"...then Allah brings forth the later creation; verily Allah is powerful over everything'."

Both this verse and the verse before it prove the possibility of Resurrection through the way of the vastness of Providence, with this difference that the first verse talks about the first creation of man himself and whatever is around him while the second verse commands to study the different states of other nations and creatures so that they see the first life in different features and in various conditions, and be acquainted with the generality of the Power of Allah and understand His ability to the return of this life.

In fact, in the same way that proving Monotheism is sometimes possible by observing the 'introversive signs' and sometimes by 'extroversive signs', proving resurrection can be done through both of them, too.

Today, this verse can give scientists some deeper and more exact meaning in this manner that they go and see the effects of the first living creatures in the depth of the seas, inside mountains, and between the levels of the earth.

In this way, they can understand a part of the secrets of the beginning of life in the earth as well as the greatness and power of Allah, and do know that He is able to bring back the life.

By the way, the Arabic word /naš'at/ originally means 'to create and train something' and sometimes the term: /naš'at-il-'ula/ is used for 'this world' and /naš'at al-'axirah/ is used in the sense of 'the next world'.

This point is also notable that at the end of the previous verse the sentence:

"Verily that is easy for Allah"

and at the end of this verse the sentence:

"Verily Allah is powerful over everything"

are mentioned. This difference may be for the sake that the first verse states a limit study and the second one indicates to a vast study.

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verses 21-22

يُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَرْحَمُ مَن يَشَآءُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُقْلَبُونَ

وَمَآ أَنتُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ فِي الأَرْضِ وَلاَ فِي السَّمَآءِ وَمَا لَكُم مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلاَ نَصِيرٍ

21. "He punishes whom He pleases and has mercy on whom He pleases, and unto Him you will be turned back."
22. "You are not able to frustrate Him either in the earth or in heavens; and you have not, apart from Allah, either protector or helper."

The training style of the Qur'an is in a manner that when it states the love and wrath of Allah it often begins with love and mercy and then refers to wrath and chastisement, but since this verse is the continuation of the rejection of disbelievers it has begun the words about punishment, and next to it, it has spoken about the Divine mercy.

Then, this holy verse refers to the completion of one of the issues concerning the Resurrection, i.e. the issue of mercy and punishment.

It says:

"He punishes whom He pleases and has mercy on whom He pleases, and unto Him you will be turned back."

In other words, though His mercy precedes His punishment, here punishment has been mentioned before mercy, because the verse intends to threat and the word suitable for threat is said in this manner.

By the way, this point is also clear that the purpose of the Qur'anic phrase: ***/man yaša'/*** (***whom He pleases***) is the Divine Will accompanied with wisdom. That is, whom He knows deserving and eligible for it, because the Divine Will is not undue and it is consistent with eligibilities and merits.

The Arabic phrase /taqlibun/ is derived from /qalb/ which originally means: 'To change a thing from one form into another form', and since on the Hereafter Day man changes from soil into a complete living being, this meaning has been used for his second creation.

This meaning may also refer to this point that in Hereafter man will be changed in a way that his inward aspect will appear and his interior secrets will be made manifest and, thus, it reminds the meaning of

verse 9 from Surah At-Tariq, No. 86, which says:

"On the Day when hidden things shall be made manifest."

Then, in the next verse, on the completion of this discussion which is about the punishment and mercy of Allah, and that the return of all is unto Him, it adds implicitly that if you think that you can exit from the domain of Allah, the Almighty, and that the grips of punishment may not seize you, you are in a great err, because:

"You are not able to frustrate Him either in the earth or in heavens..."

And if you think that a guardian or helper will defend you, you are wrong, too, because:

"...and you have not, apart from Allah, either protector or helper."

In fact, deliverance from the Divine punishment is either in the case that you go out of the realm of the government of Allah, or that you remain and, relying on the power of others, defend yourself; while neither going out of it is possible when everywhere is His realm, and all the world of existence belongs to Him, nor does anyone exist who can stand before His Power and defend you.

The Late Tabarsy in Majma'-ul-Bayan says:

"A guard in /waliyy/ is he who helps without asking".

Regarding those two words, it can be said that /waliyy/ refers to the guardian who helps without asking him to help, and /nasir/ is the helper who comes to help after asking him to help.

Thus, the Qur'an shuts all the doors of escaping from the grips of Divine punishment to the wrong-doers.

1. Torah, Genesis, chapter 9
2. You may refer to the book: "Mahdi 'Inqlabi-yi- Buzurg"
3. Mufradat by Raqib and 'Amid Dictionary

Section 3: Abraham and Lot

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verse 23

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَلِقَآئِهِ أُوْلَئِكَ يَئِسُواْ مِن رَّحْمَتِي وَأُوْلَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

23. “And those who disbelieved in the signs of Allah and His meeting, these are despaired of My mercy, and these it is that shall have a painful chastisement.”

The only people who are disappointed and deprived from the mercy of Allah are pagans.

So, in this verse the Qur’an decisively says:

“And those who disbelieved in the signs of Allah and His meeting, these are despaired of My mercy…”

Then, in order to emphasize, it adds and implies that this punishment is a requisite of being disappointed from the mercy of Allah.

The objective of the Qur’anic phrase ***/’ayatillah/*** (***the signs of Allah***) is either ‘the signs of nature’; that is, the signs of the greatness of Allah in the system of creation, which refers to the subject of Monotheism; and the Arabic term /liqa’ihi/ (His meeting) refers to the subject of Resurrection. That is, they deny both the Origin and Resurrection.

Or it refers to ‘the signs of religion; that is, the verses that Allah has sent down to His prophets, which talk about both Origin, and prophethood, and Resurrection, and in this case, the application of /liqa’/ is of the kind of mentioning ‘general’ after ‘specific’.

This probability also exists that the purpose is the entire signs of Allah in the world of creation and religion.

It is also necessary to mention this point that the Qur’anic term ***/ya’isu/*** (***they despaired of***) is a past form verb, though its main aim is future. The reason is that it is customary in Arabic literature that when the occurrence of future events is completely certain, they are sometimes said in the form of past tense of the verb.

Then, the verse continues saying:

“…and these it is that shall have a painful chastisement.”

Surah Al-‘Ankabut - Verse 24

فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلاَّ أَن قَالُوا اقْتُلُوهُ أَوْ حَرِّقُوهُ فَأَنجَاهُ اللَّهُ مِنَ النَّارِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

24. “But the answer of his people was only that they said: ‘Kill him, or burn him’. Then Allah saved him from the fire. Verily in this there are signs for a people who believe.”

When a believer overcomes the whole disbelievers, the worst plots are nullified, and fire becomes safe

and sound. Each of them is one sign out of the signs of Allah.

Now we may see what this misguided group said in answer to those three clear proofs of Abraham (as) in the field of Monotheism, prophethood, and Resurrection.

Certainly they had no logical answer; therefore, like all strong violent persons with no logic, they relied on their satanic power and issued the command of his slaughter, as the Qur'an says:

"But the answer of his people was only that they said: 'Kill him, or burn him'..."

It is understand from this meaning that a group of the pagans said that Abraham should be burnt while another group suggested his annihilation by sword or the like. Finally, the first group won since they believed, indeed, that the worst kind of execution was burning by fire.

There is also this probability that at first all of them were thinking upon his execution with ordinary means, but later all of them decided to burn him and use the maximum intensity of action.

Here, there is mentioned no word about the quality of burning Abraham. It is only mentioned at the end of the verse:

"...Then Allah saved him from the fire..."

The explanation of burning Abraham (as) in the fire is mentioned in Surah Al-'Anbia', No. 21, verses 68-70 which was discussed before.

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an says:

"...Verily in this there are signs for a people who believe."

Not only one sign but also there are several signs in this event. From one side, the lack of effect of fire on the body of Abraham was a clear miracle. Change of fire into safety was another miracle. Then inability of this great powerful group against a single person, who apparently had no means, was the third miracle.

And the lack of effect of this wonderful and extraordinary event of the heart of those cruel persons was also a sing from the Providence. It took the success from those obstinate people so miraculously that the greatest signs do not affect on them.

A tradition indicates that when Abraham was thrown in the middle of the fire, the only thing that was burnt from him was the rope with which Abraham was fastened firmly.[1]

Yes, the fire of ignorance and crime of those mischief-mongers burnt only the means of captivity, and Abraham became free; and this is counted another sign.

It may be because of these things that in the story of Noah and his deliverance by the Ark, the Qur'an says:

"...we made it a sign for all peoples."2

(In the singular form), and here it says:

"Signs"

(in the plural form.)

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verse 25

وَقَالَ إِنَّمَا اتَّخَذْتُم مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْثَاناً مَّوَدَّةَ بَيْنِكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكْفُرُ بَعْضُكُم بِبَعْضٍ وَيَلْعَنُ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضاً وَمَأْوَاكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِن نَّاصِرِينَ

25. "And said (Abraham): 'You have chosen only idols instead of Allah; the love between you is only the life of the world. Then on the Day of Resurrection some of you shall deny the others, and some of you shall curse the others and your abode shall be the (Hell) Fire, and for you shall not be any helpers."

Among the idolater tribes the idols were the axis and every tribe had a particular idol; for example, Quraysh had an idol called 'Uzza, Thaqif had an idol called Lat, the idol of tribes 'Aus and Khazraj was called Manat, and these idols were the means of the link of idolaters with their ancestors.

However, by the grace of Allah, Abraham (as) delivered extraordinarily from that great fire, but he only did not desist from stating his aims but also strengthened it with more speed and enthusiasm.

The verse says:

"And said (Abraham): 'You have chosen only idols instead of Allah; the love between you is only the life of the world. Then on the Day of Resurrection some of you shall deny the others, and some of you shall curse the others and your abode shall be the (Hell) Fire, and for you shall not be any helpers."

How was the choice of idols as the cause of love between the idolaters?

This question can be answered in different ways:

The first is that worshipping an idol in every tribe was the secret of unity between them and for every tribe there was a chosen idol. It has been cited about the famous idols of the Age of Ignorance that the people of every city or tribe had an idol, (including the idol of ('Uzza belonged to Quraysh, Lat belonged

to Thaqif tribe and Manat was particular to 'Aus and Khazraj).3

Another matter was that worshipping idols had created a relation between them and their ancestors and they often pretended by the same pretext that those things were the traces of their ancestors which they followed.

Besides, the chiefs of the pagans invited their followers to worship idols and this was a ring of join between 'the chiefs' and their 'followers'.

But on the Day of Hereafter, all these chaffy and rotten links will be broken, and everyone puts its sin on another one's shoulder while he curses him and repudiates the deed of the other.

Even their objects of worship that they wrongly thought they were the means of their relation with Allah and about which they said:

***"…'We only serve them in order that they may bring us nearer to Allah…"**4,*

will repudiate them, as the Qur'an says:

***"No, soon they (gods) shall deny their worship, and become adversaries against them."**5*

Therefore, the purpose of 'denying some of them the others and some of them shall curse the others' is that on that Day they will repudiate each other, and what was the cause of their link and false love in this world will change into enmity and hatred in Hereafter, as the Qur'an, in Surah Az-Zukhruf, No. 43, verse 67 says:

"Friends on that Day will be foes, one to another, except the pious ones."

It is understood from some Islamic narrations that this meaning is not particular to idol worshippers but all those who chose a false leader for them and followed him, and had covenant of love with him, on Hereafter Day, will be foes of each other.6

The love connection between the believers is based upon Monotheism, theism, and obedience of the command of Allah in this world, which will take the colour of perpetuance here and will be become stronger there.

It is understand from some traditions that in Hereafter the believers even ask forgiveness and intercession for each other, while the polytheists will be busy cursing each other.7

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verse 26

فَامَنَ لَهُ لُوطٌ وَقَالَ إِنّي مُهَاجِرٌ إِلَي رَبّي إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

26. "Then Lot believed in him (***Abraham***) ***and he said: 'I am a fugitive unto my Lord, for verily He is the Mighty, the Wise."***

Sometimes there had been several Divine prophets at the same time among people, but only one of them had been Imam and leader.

This holy verse points to the Faith of Lot and migration of Abraham when it says:

"Then Lot believed in him (***Abraham***)***..."***

Lot was one of the great prophets of Allah and he was a close relative of Abraham; (it is said that he was Abraham's nephew) and in view of the fact that following a great person is as following an Ummah, Allah here specially speaks of Lot's faith, the great personality contemporary to Abraham, in order to make clear that if others did not believe it would not have been important.

Of course, it seems that there were some receptive hearts in the land of Babylon to accept the invitation of Abraham, and after observing that great miracle they believed in him, but they were a minority.

Then the verse adds:

"...and he said: 'I am a fugitive unto my Lord, for verily He is the Mighty, the Wise."

It is clear that when the Divine leaders had fulfilled their mission in a region and the atmosphere of the environment was so polluted and under the pressure of the tyrants that it stopped the progress of their invitation, they ought to migrate from that place to another region so that they can spread the invitation of Allah.

Abraham (as) accompanied with Lot and his wife (Sarah) also started to go to Syria, the site of Divine prophets and Monotheism, in order to be able to gather some persons and means for developing the invitation of Monotheism.

It is interesting that Abraham (as) says:

"***I am a fugitive unto my Lord***".

The reason was that this path was the path of Allah, the Almighty, the path of His pleasure, and the path of His religion.

Of course, some commentators have said that probably the pronoun in the Qur'anic word ***/qala/*** refers to Lot; that is, Lot said that he is fugitive unto his Lord. The apparent of the sentence is consistent to this meaning, but the historical and Qur'anic evidence shows that the antecedent is Abraham and the emigration of Lot (as) was done in subordination to Abraham (as).

The Qur'anic evidence of this statement is Surah As-Saffat, No. 37, verse 99 that from the tongue of

Abraham says:

"He said: 'I will go to my Lord! He will surely guide me'."[8]

Surah Al-'Ankabut – Verse 27

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِ النُّبُوَّةَ وَالْكِتَابَ وءَاتَيْنَاهُ أَجْرَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِنَّهُ فِي الآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

27. "And We granted him Isaac and Jacob, and We appointed the Prophecy and the Book to be among his progeny, and We gave him his recompense in the world, and verily in the Hereafter he will certainly be of the Righteous."

The reward of the sincere services and goodness to father is seen in one's descendants. In this verse, the Qur'an refers to the four merits that Allah gave Abraham after his emigration.

The first merit was some worthy offsprings, those who could keep the torch of faith and prophethood light in his progeny.

The verse says:

"And We granted him Isaac and Jacob..."

They were two great and eligible prophets each of whom could continue the way and the line of Abraham, the iconoclast prophet.

The second merit was as follows:

"...and We appointed the Prophecy and the Book to be among his progeny..."

The third merit was what is said by the Qur'an as follows:

"...and We gave him his recompense in the world..."

This reward, which has been mentioned secretly, may refer to different affairs; such as 'good name' and 'truthful tongue' among all nations, because all nations respect Abraham as a great prophet, and boast for his existence, and call him 'the chief prophet'.

Among his other rewards can be mentioned as: the flourish of Mecca by his supplication, the attraction of all hearts toward him and the yearly recollection of his glorious instructive, faith-creative remembrance in the rites of Hajj ceremonies.

The fourth merit is as follows:

"...and verily in the Hereafter he will certainly be of the Righteous."

As it is understood from many verses of the Qur'an, being among the righteous ones is the utmost honour that a person may earn. That was why many prophets asked Allah that He would appoint them in the row of the righteous.

After gaining the highest apparent victories, Yusuf asked Allah and said:

"...cause me die Muslim (in submission unto You) and join me with the righteous."[9]

Solomon, with all glorious rank and magnificence he had, said:

"...and admit me, by Your mercy, among Your righteous servants."[10]

When the contract of Shu'ayb with Moses finished, he said:

"If Allah wills, you will find me one the righteous ones".[11]

Abraham asked Allah that He might count him among the righteous, saying:

"My Lord! Bestow wisdom on me, and join me with the righteous."[12]

And he would have a righteous son.[13]

In many verses of the Qur'an when Allah admires the great prophets, He characterizes them as being among the righteous.

It is well understood from the totality of these verses that 'being righteous' is the highest stage of the development of a man.

What does 'to be righteous' mean? It means eligibility from the point of faith and belief, eligibility from the point of action, and eligibility from the point of speech and morals.

The opposite point of 'righteous' is 'corruptible', and we know that corruption envelops all injustice, cruelties, and indecencies.

In the Qur'an sometimes /salah/ is used instead of /fasad/ and sometimes instead of /sayyi'ah/ which means sin and evils.

Some commentators have said that there is a tender point in the above verse and it is that Allah changed all the inconvenient things of Abraham (as) into their opposites:

1- The idol-worshippers of Babylon decisively wanted to burn Abraham by fire, but fire was changed into safety.

2- They desired that he should be alone forever, but Allah set a very abundant population for him so that throughout of the world was filled with the progeny of Abraham.

3- Some of the close persons to Abraham went astray and became idol worshippers, including 'Athar, instead of it Allah gave him some children that not only they themselves were guided aright but also they guided others.

4- At the beginning Abraham had not any wealth and dignity, but at last Allah gave him great wealth and dignity.

5- At the beginning Abraham was so undistinguished that even when the idol worshippers of Babylon wanted to mention him, they said:

"...'We heard a youth making mention of them, who is called Abraham'." 14

But Allah gave him such a fame that he became known as 'the chief of prophets, or 'the chief of Messengers'. 15

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verses 28-30

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ

أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ وَتَقْطَعُونَ السَّبِيلَ وَتَأْتُونَ فِي نَادِيكُمُ الْمُنْكَرَ ۖ فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ

قَالَ رَبِّ انْصُرْنِي عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

28. "And (remember) Lot when he said to his people: 'Verily you commit a lewdness which none of the people of the worlds has ever done before you'."
29. "Do you approach males and cut the way (of natural matrimony), and you commit dishonour in your assemblies? But his people gave no answer except that they said: 'Bring us the chastisement of Allah if you are of the truthful (ones)'.
30. "He (Lot) said: 'My Lord! Help me against the mischievous people!'"

The religious leaders should note the corruptions, evils, and public dangers of the society and try to remove them.

After stating a part of life story of Abraham, in this verse the Qur'an refers to a part of life story of his contemporary prophet, Lot (as), when it says:

“And (remember) Lot when he said to his people: ‘Verily you commit a lewdness which none of the people of the worlds has ever done before you’.”

The Arabic word /fahišah/ (lewdness), as was mentioned before, is derived from /fuhš/ which originally means: any word or saying which is very ugly, sharp and biting, and here it ironically means ‘sodomy’.

It is clearly understood from the Qur’anic sentence, saying:

“...which none of the people of the worlds has ever done before you”

that this ugly and shameful action, at least in the public and general form, had not been done among no nation and group.

Around the qualities of the people of Lot (as) it has been recorded that one of the main factors of their pollution in this action was that they were some miser people.

Their cities were on the way of caravans of Syria and, by this action unto some of their guests and travelers, they caused them to become hateful to them, but the desire of sodomy strengthened among them and they were accustomed to it.

However, they carry both the burden of their own sin and the burden of the sin of those who will follow their action in the future (without that their sin may be decreased anything), because they were the founders of this ugly and evil deed; and we know that whoever creates a tradition he will share the acts of those who commit it.

Through the next verse, the Qur’an implies that Lot, this great prophet, stated his purpose more clearly, when he said:

“Do you approach males and cut the way (of natural matrimony), and you commit dishonour in your assemblies?...”

The Arabic word /nadi/ is derived from /nada’/ in the sense of ‘public meeting’, and sometimes it is used with the sense of ‘a pleasure center’ and ‘to call’ since the people there usually call each other.

The Holy Qur’an has not explained here that what kind of lewdnesses they used to commit in their meetings, but without saying it is evident that they were some deeds consistent to their own ugly action, and as some records written in history books indicate that they used to exchange some abuses and ugly biting words between them.

They used to beat at the backs of each other with their palms; they gambled; they had some childish plays, in particular that they threw pebbles to each other and to the wayfarers; they played kinds of musical instruments; and even at the presence of public they committed indecent exposure and sometimes they showed their pudenda.

A tradition from 'Umm-i-Hani from the Prophet (S) indicates that in answer to the question about

"...you commit dishonour in your assemblies..."

he (S) said:

"They used to throw pebbles toward whoever passed by and mocked them."[16]

Now we are going to see what the answer of this astray and shameful people was to the logical words of Hadrat Lot (as).

The Qur'an says:

"...But his people gave no answer except that they said: 'Bring us the chastisement of Allah if you are of the truthful (ones)'.

Yes, those sensual persons, who had not enough intellect and comprehension, said this saying with mockery in answer to the logical invitation of Lot.

It is understood from this answer of theirs that, besides his reasonable words, Lot also threatened them by the painful chastisement of Allah if they continued their own way. But they left all and took only this one mockingly. Something similar to this meaning has also been mentioned in Surah Qamar, No. 54, verse 36.

It says:

"And (Lot) did warn them of Our violent seizure but they disputed about the warning."

This statement of the astray people shows that they wanted to take result from the lack of descent of chastisement and say that Lot was a liar, while it is from the mercy of Allah that He gives respite to the most polluted people in order to study, review, and return to the truth.

The next verse implies that it was here that Lot could do nothing and turned to Allah and, with a heart full of sorrow and grief, asked Him as follows:

"He (Lot) said: 'My Lord! Help me against the mischievous people!'"

A people who have made mischief on the earth, have ignored morals and piety, have set aside chastity and modesty, have trodden the social justice, have often mixed paganism and idolatry with immorality, injustice, and cruelty, and have threatened the generation of man to extinction and destruction. So he asked Allah to make him victorious against these astray mischief-mongers.

At the end, sodomy, whether among men (lawat) or among women, (lesbianism), is of the worst ethical deviations which can he the origin of many corruptions in the society.

In principle, the nature of woman and man has been created in such a way that they find their tranquility and sound satiation in being attached to opposite sex (by the way of sound marriage); and, otherwise, any kind of sexual inclination is deviation from the safe nature of man, and it is a kind of psychic disease that, in case of continuation, it intensifies a day after another, and its result is dislike to the 'opposite sex' by unsafe satiation with homosexuality.

These kinds of unlawful relations have some destructive effects on the limbs of man's body and even they are effective in the nervous system and spirit.

They change man from being a complete man and woman from being a complete woman in a way that such women and men who are accustomed to homosexuality will be entangled with an intensive sexual weakness and they will not be able to be a good parents for their future children, and sometimes they lose utterly the ability of producing offspring.

Those who practise homosexuality may gradually tend to reclusion and also alienation from society and then alienation from themselves, and also involve the psychotic complicated contradiction, and if they do not improve themselves they may be afflicted with various psychotic sexual sicknesses.

For this reason and for other ethical and social reasons, Islam has intensively banned the practice of homosexuality in any form and manner, and has appointed a serious punishment that sometimes it is nigh to execution.

The important matter here is that libertinism and seeking miscellaneousness of the material civilized world draw the boys and girls toward this great ugly deviation.

At first, it encourages boys to wearing frivolous woman clothing with special ornamentation, and invites girls to wear boy clothing, and from this point deviation and the practice of homosexuality begins so far that the most shameful shapes of deeds in this field are legally approved, in some countries, and are free from any punishment so impudently that pen shames to explain them.[17]

Some Traditions Upon Sodomy and its Punishment

1- The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

"The thing I fear for my Ummah most of all is the act of the people of Lot (Sodomy)."[18]

2- The Prophet (S) said:

"If you find someone who does the act of the people of Lot, do know that its punishment in Islam is execution."[19]

3- Imam Rida (as) said:

“The reason of banning men for men and women for women is the structure of women and the nature of men (that each of them has been created for the opposite sex), and that going men to men and women to women causes the cut of generation (of mankind) and also disturbance of the order of management (in the society) and wasting the world.”[20]

4- In answer to the reason of banning of sodomy, Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“If the act of sodomy were lawful, the men would be needless of women, and the generation (of mankind) might be cut, women remained without husband, and there would exist many corruptions in the authorization of sodomy.

And Allah created women for men so that they associate with them and gain tranquility by them, and women are the site of men’s lust and mothers of their children.”[21]

1. Rauh-ul-Ma‘ani, the Commentary, Vol. 20, P. 130
2. The current Surah, verse 15
3. Sirah by Ibn-i-Husham, Vol. 1, PP. 86-87
4. Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, verse 3
5. Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 82
6. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Commentary, Vol. 4, P. 154
7. Tauhid-i-Sadugh, according to the narration of Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4. P. 154
8. In relation to the emigration of Abraham from Babylon to Syria, there is a detailed discussion under verse 71 on from Surah Al-’Anbiya, No. 21, in Nimunah commentary, Vol. 13, P. 451 on
9. Surah Yusuf, No. 12, verse 101
10. Surah An-Naml, No. 27, verse 19
11. Surah Qasas, No. 28, verse 27
12. Surah Ash-Shu‘ara, No. 26, verse 83
13.
14. Surah Al-’Anbiya’, No. 21, verse 60
15. The Commentary by Fakhr-i-Razi
16. The Commentary by Qurtabi
17. Concerning the banning of sodomy and its philosophy in Islam, there was a detailed explanation mentioned in the commentary of Surah Hud, No. 11, verses 79-80
18. At-Tarqib wal-Tarhib, Vol. 3, P. 285
19. Ibid, and Vol. 7, P. 288
20. ‘Ilal-ush-Sharayi‘, Vol. 1, P. 547
21. Bihar, Vol. 10, P. 181

Section 4: The Mission of Abraham, Lot, Shu‘ayb

and Moses

Surah Al-‘Ankabut – Verse 31

وَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ رُسُلُنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ بِالْبُشْرَىٰ قَالُوا إِنَّا مُهْلِكُوا أَهْلِ هَٰذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ إِنَّ أَهْلَهَا كَانُوا ظَالِمِينَ

31. “And when Our messengers came to Abraham with the glad tidings (of a son unto him), they said: ‘Verily we are going to destroy the people of this town, for verily its people are unjust’.”

In Sahifah Sajjadiyyah, Imam Sajjad (as) mentions some groups of angels each of which has a special responsibility, but those angels who came to Hadrat ’Ibrahim (as) had several aims. They were missions both for giving glad tidings of a child to Abraham (as), and for announcing the punishment of the people of Lot, and the executives of the Divine punishment.

This verse indicates that finally the supplication of Lot was accepted and the command of a heavy and severe punishment for this evil people was issued from the side of Allah.

Before their arrival to the land of Lot for performing their mission, the angels of punishment went to the area where Abraham lived for the fulfilment of another mission, i.e. the glad tidings of the birth of children to Abraham (as)

The abovementioned verse, at first, refers to their meeting with Abraham (as) and says:

“And when Our messengers came to Abraham with the glad tidings (of a son unto him)...”

Then, pointing to the cities of the people of Lot, the angels added to their statement as follows:

“...they said: ‘Verily we are going to destroy the people of this town, for verily its people are unjust’.”

The application of the Qur’anic phrase ***/haihil qaryah/*** (***this town***) is an evidence that the cities of the people of Lot were in the neighbourhood of Abraham’s land.

The application of the Arabic word /zalim/ (unjust) is for the sake that they were unjust both to themselves, who took the way of polytheism, immorality, and corruptibility, and to others so that their injustice and cruelty involved even all the wayfarers and the caravans that crossed that land.

Surah Al-‘Ankabut - Verse 32

قَالَ إِنَّ فِيهَا لُوطاً قَالُوا نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن فِيهَا لَنُنَجِّيَنَّهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلاَّ امْرَأَتَهُ كَانَتْ مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ

32. “Said (Abraham to the messenger angels): ‘Verily Lot is in it.’ They said: ‘We know very well who is in it; we shall certainly deliver him and his family, except his wife; she shall of those who stay behind’.”

The social title is not important, but the Faith and righteous deed are criterions. Being the prophet’s wife alone is not a value, but being in his accompany and following him is a value. The wives of prophets are not sinless. (Even among the wives of the Prophet of Islam (S) only a few of them were favoured by the special grace of Allah.

This noble verse indicates that when Abraham heard this statement, he worried about Lot, the great prophet of Allah, and he asked about his fate.

The verse says:

“Said (Abraham to the messenger angels): ‘Verily Lot is in it.’...”

Then the messenger angels, in answer to him, immediately said that he should not be worried:

“...They said: ‘We know very well who is in it...”

They meant that never Allah chastises evildoers and good doers with together and His program is completely accurate and calculated.

Then, they added:

“...we shall certainly deliver him and his family, except his wife; she shall of those who stay behind’.”

It is understood from this verse that in all of those cities there was only one pure faithful family and Allah delivered them on time, either; as it is mentioned is Surah Ath-Thariyat:

“But We found not there any except one Muslim household.”[1]

And, moreover, the wife of Lot was also out of the row of believers and, therefore, she was punished.

The Arabic word /qabirin/ is the plural form of /qabir/ with the sense of ‘the one whose companions go only he one remains. The woman who was among the family of prophethood must not separate from the Muslims and believers, but her infidelity, polytheism, and idolatry caused her separation.

This makes clear that her deviation was only from the point of belief, and it is not improbable that she had got this deviation from her own environment while at the beginning she had been faithful and monotheist; and in this case there will be no objection to Lot that why he married such a woman.

By the way, if there were some other people who had believed in Lot, they would certainly have migrated from that polluted land before this event. It was only Lot and his family that had to stay there until the last hour that he thought his teaching and warning might have an effect in them.

There may arise a question here that did Abraham (as) think that probably the punishment of Allah might seize Lot, too, that he expressed his worry about Lot before the angels and they assured him that Lot would be delivered?

The clear answer to this question is that Abraham knew the matter but for the certainty of his heart he asked, as this very great prophet had a similar condition about Resurrection and by restoring the birds to life Allah illustrated the scenery of Resurrection in front of him.

But 'Allamah Tabataba'i, the great commentator, believes that the aim of Abraham was that he took the existence of Lot among that nation as a reason for removing the punishment from them, and 'Allamah takes help from Surah Hud, No. 11, verses 74-76 for this purpose, because these verses say:

"...he began disputing with Us concerning the people of Lot."
"O Abraham! Forsake this! Indeed the decree of your Lord has come to pass and surely there is coming (upon) them an irreversible chastisement."[2]

But we believe that the answer that the angels gave here about the deliverance of Lot and his family clearly shows that in these verses only Lot was spoken of, while the verses of Surah Hud pursue a separate matter and, as we said, Abraham (as) asked this question only for being assured more. (Be careful)

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verse 33

وَلَمَّآ أَن جَآءَتْ رُسُلُنَا لُوطاً سِيءَ بِهِمْ وَضَاقَ بِهِمْ ذَرْعاً وَقَالُوا لاَ تَخَفْ وَلاَ تَحْزَنْ إِنَّا مُنَجُّوكَ وَأَهْلَكَ إِلاَّ امْرَأَتَكَ كَانَتْ مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ

33. "And when Our messengers came to Lot he was grieved on their account and distressed for them; but they said: 'Fear not, nor grieve, for verily we shall deliver you and your family, except your wife, she shall be of those who stay behind."

In a polluted society the men of Allah are in straitened circumstances, and even for protecting their own guests and children they are worried, too.

The family relation does not save a person but faith and righteous deed is the key of deliverance.

This verse says:

"And when Our messengers came to Lot he was grieved on their account and distressed for them…"

Lot's anxiety was for that he did not know them. They were in the form of some handsome youths, and the arrival of such guests in that polluted environment might become the source of trouble for Lot and probably disrespect before his guests. Therefore, he became seriously thoughtful that what the reaction of those astray, disgrace and shameless people might be before these honourable guests.

The Qur'anic ***/si'a/*** is derived from /sa'a/ in the sense of 'to become grievous'; and the Arabic word /□ar'/ means: 'heart' or 'temper'. Thus, the Qur'anic phrase: ***/daqa bihim □ar'a/*** means ***'he became grievous and inconvenient.'***

Some of the Islamic commentators have said that this phrase originally means 'the distance between the front legs of a camel at the time of walking' and since when a heavy load is put on its back it decreases the distance of its steps lesser and narrower, this sentence /daqa □ar'a/ is mentioned as ironically for a heavy and laborious event.

But when the guests found his inconvenience soon they introduced themselves and removed his anxiety and told him those shameless people could not do anything, and all of them would be annihilated soon.

The verse says:

"…but they said: 'Fear not, nor grieve, for verily we shall deliver you and your family, except your wife, she shall be of those who stay behind."

Of course, the verses of Surah Hud clearly show that when those evil people were informed of the arrival of the guests of Lot they came to him and intended to bother them.

Lot, who had not known the angels, became very anxious, wanted to hinder them from doing that action: sometimes with advice, sometimes with threat, sometimes by way of arousing their conscience, saying that:

"…is there not among you one upright man?",[3]

and sometimes by the way of suggesting them to marry his daughters. But those disgrace people did not accept anything and they thought only of their own evil aim.

But the messengers of Allah introduced themselves to Lot (as) and by means of Divine miracle made the eyes of those attacking persons blind and caused the heart of this great prophet to rest.

It is notable that the messenger angels of Allah told Lot (as) that he should not fear and grieve. Concerning the difference between /xauf/ and /huzn/ it is cited in Al-Mizan, the commentary, that /xauf/ is used about the inconvenient probable events and /huzn/ about some decisive and certain instances.

Some commentators believe that the Qur'anic word ***/xauf/*** (***fear***) relates to the future events and the term /***qam/*** (***grief***) relates to the past events.

It is also probable that ***/xauf/*** is used in relation to dangerous instances, but ***/qam/*** is related to painful events, though there is no danger in them.

There is a question here that according to the verses of Surah Hud the fear and grief of Lot were not about himself, but he feared that those evil people might make trouble for his guests while the answer the angels gave him was about the deliverance of Lot and his family and these two are not consistent with each other.

The answer to this question can be understood from Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 81, because when the shameful people came to bother the guests, the angels told Lot:

"...fear not nor grieve, for verily we shall deliver you and your family...". [4]

That is, 'they not only cannot bother us, but also are not able to hurt you.' Therefore, the angels took their deliverance certain, and verily it was certain, and they concentrated the glad tidings on the deliverance of Lot and his family.

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verses 34-35

إِنَّا مُنزِلُونَ عَلَي أَهْلِ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ رِجْزاً مِنَ السَّمَآءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ

وَلَقَد تَّرَكْنَا مِنْهَآ ءَايَةً بَيّنَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

34. "Verily We are bringing down upon the people of this town a punishment from heaven for what they were transgressing."
35. "And certainly We have left a clear sign of it for a people who have sense."

The repetition of sin and persisting to its doing cause the descent of the chastisement of Allah.

The acquaintance with the philosophy of history and being acquainted with past generations are regarded by the Qur'an.

In order that the fate of this polluted group of people might be made more clear in their mission, the Qur'an adds:

“Verily We are bringing down upon the people of this town a punishment from heaven for what they were transgressing.”

The objective of the Qur’anic word ***/qaryah/*** (***town***) is ‘Sudum’ and the cities and towns around it where the people of Lot used to live. The population of them has been mentioned seven hundred thousand people.5

And the objective of the Arabic term ***/rijz/*** here is ‘***punishment***’. Its original meaning is ‘***anxiety***’, then everything that causes anxiety is called /rijz/ and thus Arabs use it in a lot of senses, like harsh afflictions, plaque, intensive snow and hail, idol, the temptation of Satan, and Divine punishment.

The Qur’anic sentence /bima kanu yafsuqun/ (for what they were transgressing) states the cause of their painful punishment that was transgression and disobedience from the command of Allah, and its application in future form of the verb is an indication to the continuation of their ugly deeds.

This meaning shows this fact that if those people stopped the continuation of it and returned to the path of right, piety and purity, they would not he involved in such a punishment and their past sins would be forgiven.

In this verse the manner of their painful punishment has not been explained, and it only refers to the ruins of their afflicted and non-afflicted cities, when it says:

“And certainly We have left a clear sign of it for a people who have sense.”

But the explanation of their punishment is referred to in Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 82 and Surah Al-’A‘raf, No 7, verse 84, implying that at first a severe earthquake turned their cities upside down and then a shower of stone rained on them in a way that their bodies and their ruined cities and castles were buried under it.

The application of the Qur’anic phrase ***/’ayatan bayyinatan/*** (***a clear sign***) refers to the remaining of the city of ‘Sudum’ which, according to the verses of the Qur’an, was located alongside the way of the caravans of the people of Medina and Mecca and they could see it at the advent of Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam (S), as Surah Al-Hijr, No. 15, verse 76 says:

“It is on a way (***yet***) ***remaining.”,***

and Surah As-Saffat, No. 37, verse 137-138 says:

“Verily you pass by their (***cities***) ***by day,” “And by night; will you not ponder?”***

Surah Al-‘Ankabut - Verse 36

وَإِلَي مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْباً فَقَالَ يَاقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَارْجُوا الْيَوْمَ الآخِرَ وَلاَ تَعْثَوْا فِي الأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ

36. "And to Madyan (We did send) their brother Shu'ayb, so he said: 'O my people! Worship Allah, and look you for the Last Day; and do not act corruptly in the land, making mischief."

Monotheism and Resurrection are at the top of the godly invitation of the Divine prophets.

The servitude unto Allah (s.w.t.) and the belief in Origin and Resurrection both are some preparation for separation from corruption.

Next to the story of Lot and his people, the stories of other peoples, such as the people of Shu'ayb, the people of 'Ad, the people of Thamud, Korah and Pharaoh, come forth.

At first, it says:

"And to Madyan (We did send) their brother Shu'ayb..."

As we have repeatedly said before, the application of the word 'brother' in the verse refers to the utmost love and affection of these prophets unto their peoples, and it shows the lack of seeking domination over them. These prophets, of course, had often relation with their peoples, too.

Madyan is a city in the west south of Jordan which is called Mu'an today and it is located in the east of 'Aqabah Golf, where Shu'ayb and his people lived.

Like other great Divine prophets, Shu'ayb began his invitation from belief in Origin and Resurrection which are the foundation of any Divine religion.

The verse says:

"...so he said: 'O my people! Worship Allah, and look you for the Last Day..."

Belief in Origin causes man to feel constant observation from the side of Allah upon his deeds, and belief in Resurrection reminds man of the great court where everything of man will be dealt with entirely.

Belief in these two great principles will certainly have an extraordinary effect in training and improvement of man.

The third command of Shu'ayb was an inclusive practical order which envelops all social programs.

He said:

"...and do not act corruptly in the land, making mischief."

The word corruption has a vast meaning which encompasses any kind of vice, disturbance, destruction,

deviation, and transgression. The opposite point to it is righteousness and reconciliation in the concept of which the whole constructive programs are gathered.

The Qur'anic term ***/ta'au/*** is derived from /'aa/ in the meaning of 'to make mischief', with the difference that this meaning is mostly used in relation of ethical corruptions. Therefore, mentioning the Qur'anic word /mufsidin/ after it is for emphasis.

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verse 37

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جَاثِمِينَ

37. "But they belied him, so the earth quake seized them, and they lay (***deed***) ***in their abodes motionless by the morning."***

The Arabic word /rajfah/ means the shake of the earth. The word /'arajif/ is used for the news ad words which cause instability in the faith and spirit of people, and the word /marjuf/ is used for those who say or write such matters.

This verse implies that the people of Shu'ayb, instead of hearkening to the advices of this great reformer, tried to reject him.

"But they belied him…"

This act of theirs caused that a severe earthquake seized them. The verse continues saying:

"…so the earth quake seized them…"

The Arabic term ***/jaim/*** is derived from /jam/ in the sense of 'sitting on the knee' and 'staying in one place'.

It is not improbable that this meaning refers to the fact that at the time of this severe earthquake they were asleep and suddenly they got up. As soon as they sat on their knees, the event did not give them respite, and by falling down the walls, which was accompanied with that fatal earthquake, they lost their own lives.

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verse 38

وَعَاداً وَثَمُودَاْ وَقَد تَبَيَّنَ لَكُم مِن مَسَاكِنِهِمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَكَانُوا مُسْتَبْصِرِينَ

38. "And (***We destroyed***) ***'Ad and Thamud, and it has become clear to you from their dwelling-***

places, and Satan made their deeds fair-seeming unto them, so he kept them back from the (right) path, though they were keen-sighted."

Pride, self-admiration, and boasting for wealth and power are some examples of satanic ornamentations.

Man naturally loves beauty and adornment, and the Satan misuses this man's inner quality.

In this verse, the words are about the people of 'Ad and the people of Thamud without mentioning any thing about their prophets (Hud and Salih) and their talks to these two obstinate peoples, because they were two known nations that the story of their prophets has been repeatedly referred to in other verses of the Qur'an.

It says:

"And (We destroyed) 'Ad and Thamud..."

Then, it adds implying that the ruins of their cities in the lands of Hijr and Yemen are alongside your way.

"...and it has become clear to you from their dwelling-places..."

In your journeys toward Yemen and Syria for commerce and trade, every year you cross the land Hijr, which is located in the north of Arabia, and the land of 'Ahqaf, which is located in the south and near to Yemen, and you observe the ruins of the cities of 'Ad and Thamud with your own eyes; then why do you not take an example?

Then, the noble verse points to the main cause of their wretchedness and says:

"...and Satan made their deeds fair-seeming unto them, so he kept them back from the (right) path..."

They treated like that while they had keen eyes and intellect. Their nature was on Monotheism and piety, and the Divine prophets had also shown them sufficiently the right path.

The verse continues saying:

"...though they were keen-sighted."

Some commentators have taken this sentence in the sense of having vigilant eyes and enough wisdom, while some others have meant it into 'safe nature', and some others into correct use of the guidance of Divine prophets.

It does not matter that the holy verse contains all these meanings, indicating that they were not ignorant, but formerly they knew the truth well and they had vigilant conscience, enough intellect, and the

prophets completed the argument for them, yet they left the invitation of the prophets and went after the temptations of Satan, and day after another day their evil deeds seemed beautiful to them, and they reached a point where they had no way to return.

The law of reaction burnt these dry, fruitless pieces of wood in fire of their deeds, and this was their own compensation.

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verse 39

وَقَارُونَ وَفِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَهُم مُّوسَي بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي الاَرْضِ وَمَا كَانُوا سَابِقِينَ

39. "And (We destroyed) Korah, and Pharaoh, and Haman; and indeed Moses came unto them with clear proofs, but they behaved haughtily in the land, yet they could not outstrip (Us)."

The end of arrogance is destruction and their evil fate is a gazing-stock. Allah's way of treatment is to complete argument and then taking to task will come forth.

In this holy verse, the Qur'an mentions the names of three persons each of whom was a clear sample of a satanic power.

It says:

"And (We destroyed) Korah, and Pharaoh, and Haman..."

Korah was the epiphany of wealth together with pride, egoism, and negligence. Pharaoh was the epiphany of arrogant power furnished with mischievousness; and Haman was an example of being the assistant of the oppressive tyrants.

Then, the verse says:

"...and indeed Moses came unto them with clear proofs, but they behaved haughtily in the land..."

Korah relied on his own wealth, ornament, treasures, and knowledge, while Pharaoh and Haman relied on having army, martial forces, and the great power of propagation among unaware people.

Yet, with those abilities they had they could not precede Allah and escape from the grips of His power.

The verse continues saying:

"...yet they could not outstrip (Us)."

Allah issued the command of destruction of Korah for the land, which was the place of his rest and comfort, and He commanded water, the cause of their life, to destroy Pharaoh and Haman. For

destroying them, Allah did not mobilize the hosts of heavens and the earth, but what was the cause of their life executed the command of their death![6]

The Arabic term /sabiqin/ is the plural form of term /sabiq/ which means: ‘the one who precedes’ and if it says /ma kanu sabiqin/ (they did not overreach) its concept is that ‘they could not escape from the domain of the Power of Allah with all possibilities they had and be saved from the punishment of Allah; but He annihilated them with abasement and humiliation at the same moment He decided.

Surah Al-‘Ankabut - Verse 40

فَكُلاًّ أَخَذْنَا بِذَنْبِهِ فَمِنْهُم مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَاصِباً وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ أَخَذَتْهُ الصَّيْحَةُ وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ خَسَفْنَا بِهِ الاَرْضَ وَمِنْهُم مَنْ أَغْرَقْنَا وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَكِن كَانُوا اَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

40. “So each** (**one of them**) **We seized** (**in punishment**) **for his sin; and of them, against some We sent a violent tornado** (**with showers of stones**)**, some were caught by a mighty Blast; some We caused the earth to swallow up, and some We drowned; and it was not Allah to do injustice to them, but they unto their own selves did injustice.”

We must not become proud when Allah gives us respite, since the end of sin is retribution, and it is easy for Allah to punish us with kinds of punishments.

Therefore, in this verse He says:

“So each** (**one of them**) **We seized** (**in punishment**) **for his sin…”

Indeed, since there were mentioned four groups in the previous two verses whose punishments were not mentioned there, (the people of ‘Ad, the people of Thamud, Korah, Pharaoh, and Haman), in the above verse their chastisements are stated sequentially, as follows:

“…and of them, against some We sent a violent tornado** (**with showers of stones**)**…”

The Qur’anic word ***/hasib/*** means: ***‘a violent wind bringing with it a shower of stones’***. The Arabic word /hasban/ means ‘pebbles’.

The objective of mentioning this group is ‘the people of ‘Ad’ that, according to suras Ath-Thariyat, Al-Haqqah, and Qamar, a violent and harsh wind came over them for seven nights and eight days. It ruined their houses and threw their corpses here and there like the leaves of the trees in fall.[7]

The verse continues:

“…some were caught by a mighty Blast…”

We have said that the heavenly blast is the result of thunderbolts which are usually accompanied with earthquake at the center of its occurrence, and this was the chastisement which came down upon the people of Thamud, and some other peoples, as Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 67 says about the people of Thamud:

"And the (mighty) Blast overtook those who were unjust, so they became motionless corpses in their abodes."

And in Surah Al-Qasas, No. 28, verse 81 the Qur'an says:

"And We caused the earth to swallow up him..."

This was the punishment which Korah, the rich, proud and arrogant person from the Children of Israel received; and, finally, Allah drowned some others of them.

The verse says:

"...some We caused the earth to swallow up, and some We drowned..."

We know that this meaning points to Pharaoh, Haman, and their followers which has been mentioned in different Suras of the Qur'an.

However, keeping this statement in mind, the above four chastisements are sequentially for the four evil groups whose deviation, stray, and sins were referred to in previous two verses without mentioning their punishments.

For an emphasis upon this fact that they got the result of their own deeds and reaped the product of the seed of which they themselves had scattered, at the end of the verse, the Qur'an says:

"...and it was not Allah to do injustice to them, but they unto their own selves did injustice."

Yes, the punishments in this world and the next world are some reactions and embodiments of man's deeds when they close all the doors of improvement and return to the truth to them.

Allah is more just than He does the slightest injustice and transgression to any person.

Like many other verses of the Qur'an, this verse clearly strengthens the principle of freedom of will in man, and makes this fact fully clear that making decision everywhere and for everything belongs to man himself, and Allah has created him free, and wanted him to be free.

Therefore, the belief of the followers of the school of fatalism, who also exist among Muslims, is made futile by this strong logic of the Qur'an.

Surah Al-'Ankabut – Verse 41

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَآءَ كَمَثَلِ الْعَنكَبُوتِ اتَّخَذَتْ بَيْتاً وَإِنَّ أَوْهَنَ الْبُيُوتِ لَبَيْتُ الْعَنكَبُوتِ لَوْكَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ

41. "The parable of those who take guardians besides Allah is as the parable of the spider that makes for itself a house but verily the frailest of (all) houses is the house of the spider, if they but know (this)."

To use parables is one of the best methods applied in education, and the best parable is the parable which is tangible for all levels of people everywhere and in any time.

Taking the name of 'Ankabut (spider) from this verse, the Surah under discussion has been entitled 'Ankabut.

It has been narrated from Plato who said that fly is the greediest insect which, for its livelihood, often sits on pickle, confectionery, a taint, and a wound, but a spider weaves in a corner and has continence. It is interesting that Allah has set the most active and the greediest insect as the prey of the most retiring insect. A fly goes toward the spider and it hunts the fly by its webs.

However, in the previous verses the painful and sad fate of the mischievous, arrogant, obstinate, unjust, and self-loving pagans was stated. In this relation, in this verse there has been stated an interesting parable for those who take objects of worship and guardian besides Allah for themselves, in a way that the more we contemplate about this parable, the more points we gain from it.

It says:

"The parable of those who take guardians besides Allah is as the parable of the spider that makes for itself a house but verily the frailest of (all) houses is the house of the spider, if they but know (this)."

What an expressive and interesting parable, and what a comprehensive and minute simile it is!

You can be careful that every animal and insect has a house or a nest for itself, but none of them is as weak as the spider's house.

In principle, a house must have walls, a roof, and a door and it protects its owner from bad events, and maintains his food and necessary things in it. Some houses have not ceiling but they have at least a wall, or they have not walls while they have ceilings.

But the spider's house, which is made of a few very thin webs that has neither any wall, nor any ceiling,

nor any yard, nor any door.

These are from one side. On the other side, its materials are so weak and unstable that they resist before no event, and if a mild wind blows, it will tear the webs entirely. If a few drops of rain fall on it, they destroy it wholly. The least flame of fire burns it. It will be torn up even with a little dust, and it will hang on the ceiling.

The false objects of worship of this group have neither any profit nor harm, nor can remove any difficulty, nor can be a place of refuge for any one of them on the day of affliction.

It is true that this house not only is a resting place for the spider, with its long legs, but also a snare for hunting insects and earning food, while comparing it with the houses of other animals and insects it is very weak and unstable.

Those who choose a support other than Allah, their support is as the web of spider. The crown and throne of persons like Pharaoh, the endless wealth of individuals such as Korah, the castles and treasures of the kings all are like the webs of a spider: They are weak, unstable, unreliable and ephemeral before the storm of events.

The history also shows that: verily none of these things can be the support of man, but those who rely on their faith and trust in Allah, they have relied on a firm and strong support.

It is also necessary to note that though the house of spider and its webs are used as a proverb for its weakness, that is one of the wonders of the world of creation and paying attention to it makes man more acquainted to the greatness of the Lord.

The webs of spider are made from some viscous liquid which is stored in some very small cavities as small as the needle-point located under its belly. This liquid has a special combination that when it is exposed to the weather it becomes hard and firm.

By its particular claws spider draws that liquid out from these cavities and makes its webs by it.

It is said that by this little liquid that it has, each spider is able to make about five hundred meters web.

Some commentators have said that the weakness of these webs is because of their extraordinary tenderness; else it is stronger than a steal string with the same thinness.

It is surprising that each of these webs sometimes comes out from a very small hole which is in its body. Now you may think that how tender, exact, and narrow every one of these secondary webs is produced!

Besides the wonderful materials which have been used in the structure of a spider's house, its structural shape is also interesting. If you look carefully at the sound houses of spiders, you will see an interesting scenery like a sun with its sunbeams that are built on some particular bases made of the same webs.

This house, of course, is a suitable and ideal house for spider, but on the whole, there cannot be considered a house weaker than that; and the objects that they worship other than Allah are like that house.

Regarding the fact that spider is not only of one kind, and some scholars claim that more than twenty thousand sorts of spider have been known until now and each of them has some specialties, the greatness and power of Allah is made in the creation of this small creature.

However, the application of the Qur'anic word ***/'auliya'/*** (***the plural form of /waliy/***) instead of /'asnam/ (idols) may point to this fact that not only the man-made objects of worship, but also the leaders of non-religious groups are in the same row.

The sentence /lau kanu ya'lamun/ (if they but know), that is mentioned at the end of the verse, is about the idols and false objects of worship, not about the weakness of spider's house, for its weakness is known to all.

Thus, the concept of this sentence is: if they were aware of the weakness of the objects of worship and the position that they have chosen other than Allah, they would know well that these are like the web of spider from the point of weakness.

Surah Al-'Ankabut - Verses 42-43

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ مِن شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

وَتِلْكَ الاَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَآ إِلاَّ الْعَالِمُونَ

42. "Verily, Allah knows whatever thing they call upon besides Him; and He is the Mighty, the Wise."
43. "And such are the parables We set forth for mankind, but none understand them but the learned (ones)."

The man's inclinations to other than Allah (s.w.t.) are in the knowledge of Allah, and we must make us ready to answer for it.

The verse says:

"Verily, Allah knows whatever thing they call upon besides Him..."

Instead of relying on other than Allah, which is as weak and baseless as the spider's house, we must rely on Allah, Who is the Mighty, the invincible.

The verse continues saying:

"...and He is the Mighty, the Wise."

However, in this verse the Qur'an threatens and warns these negligent unaware polytheists, and implicitly says that Allah knows whatever they call other than Him.

Neither their manifest polytheism nor their hidden one is concealed to Allah, and He is the Mighty and the Absolute Wise. If He gives respite to them, it is not for the sake that He does not know or His Power is finite, but His wisdom requires that He gives enough respite to them so that He completes the argument to all, and those who are eligible for guidance, be guided.

Some commentators have taken this sentence as an indication to the pretexts that the polytheists sought for themselves.

They used to say that if they worshipped those idols, it would not be because of the idols themselves and they were, indeed, some symbols of stars of the sky and of their prophets and angels. They said, in fact, they prostrated for them and respected them, and their 'good and evil', and their 'benefit and harm' are in their authority.

The Holy Qur'an implies that Allah knows what things the polytheists call. Whomever they may be and whatever they may be, they are like the web of spider comparing the power of His command, and they have nothing to give them.

The next verse may refer to the rejection of the enemies of the Prophet (S) who pointed to these parables and said that how is it possible that Allah, Who is the Creator of the earth and heaven, brings forth parables to spider, fly, insects, and the like?

In answer to them, the Qur'an says:

"And such are the parables We set forth for mankind, but none understand them but the learned (ones)."

The importance and tenderness of a parable is not in its being small or big, but it is in its fitness with the aim. Sometimes its being small is its most significant point of strength.

For example, when the words are mostly about the weak and baseless supports, the parable must be chosen from spider which can illustrate this weakness, instability and lack of resistance better than anything else. This is the identity of eloquence and elegance.

That is why it is said that only the learned ones can recognize the elegance and elaborations of the Qur'an.

Surah Al-‘Ankabut - Verse 44

خَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

44. “Allah created the heavens and the earth with truth, verily in this is a sign for the believers.”

The creation of the world has an aim. Our look unto the world must have an aim, too.

Materialists usually stop in recognizing the phenomena, but worshippers of Allah (theists) pass through phenomena and reach the recognition of Allah and Faith.

Therefore, this verse announces:

“Allah created the heavens and the earth with truth…”

There is no vanity and falsehood in His affair. If He brings forth parable to spider and its weak house, it is not undue; and if He has chosen a small creature for the parable, it is for stating the truth, else, He is the creator of the greatest galaxies and systems in heaven.

It is interesting that, at the end of these verses, the Qur’an emphasizes on ‘Knowledge’ and ‘Faith’.

In one place it says:

“…if they but know”[8]***,***

and in another place it says:

“…but none understand them but the learned (ones).”[9]

And here it says:

“…verily in this is a sign for the believers.”

This meaning points to this fact that the feature of the Truth is clear like the sunshine, but it appears in receptive ones. It needs an aware and seeking heart, a vigilant and submissive spirit before Allah; and if these blind-hearted persons do not see the Divine beauty, it is not because of its being hidden, but it is because of their blind eyes.

The End of Part (Juz') 20

1. Surah Ath-Thariyat, No. 51, verse 36
2.
3. Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 78
4. The verse under discussion

5. Ruh-ul-Bayan, Vol. 6, P. 467

6. The explanation of the life of Korah and the destruction of Pharaoh and his people have been mentioned in the commentary of Surah Al-Qasas, and Surah Al-'A'raf.

7. Surah Al-Haqqah, No. 69, verses 5 to 7

8. The current Surah, verse 41

9. The verses under discussion, No. 43
